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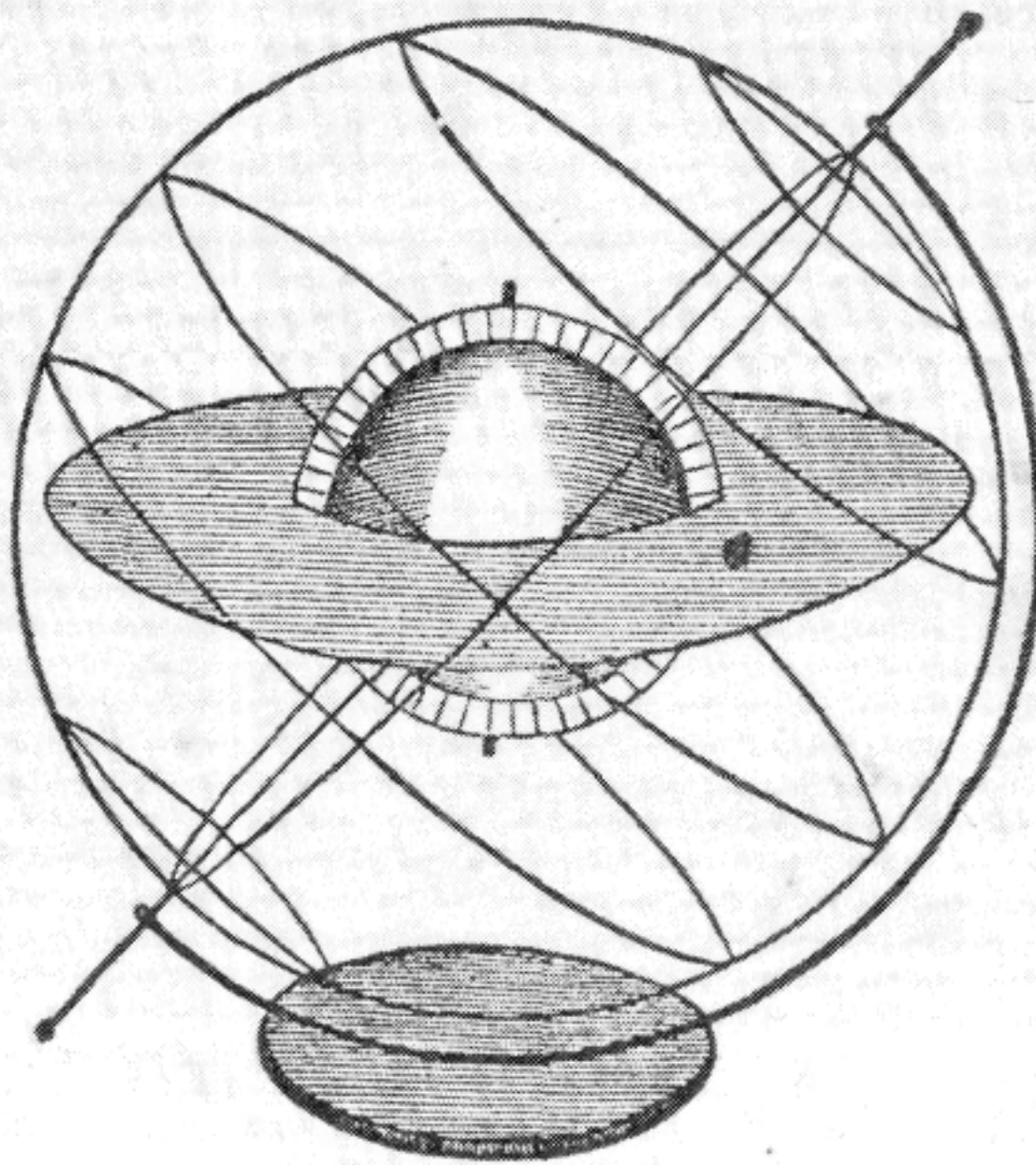
No. 1.—To be continued Annually.

## PROPHETIC ALMANAC,

FOR

# 1845.

BEING THE FIRST AFTER BISSEXTILE OR LEAP YEAR.



CALCULATED FOR THE EASTERN, MIDDLE AND WESTERN STATES AND TERRITORIES, THE NORTHERN PORTIONS OF THE SLAVE STATES, AND BRITISH PROVINCES.

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# C O N T

Guest Editor's Introduction  
*David J. Whittaker, 5*

The Constitution of the State of Deseret  
*Peter Crawley, 7*

Toward a Reconstruction of Mormon  
and Indian Relations, 1847–1877  
*Ronald W. Walker, 23*

The Rise and Decline  
of Mormon San Bernardino  
*Edward Leo Lyman, 43*

Capons  
A POEM  
*Jim Walker, 64*

The Move South  
*Richard D. Poll, 65*

Almanacs in the New England  
Heritage of Mormonism  
*David J. Whittaker, 89*



# E N T S

## Ritual Rising

A POEM

*Dixie Partridge*, 114

## The Apogee of Loneliness

A POEM

*Randall L. Hall*, 136

## Index, Volume 29, Numbers 1–4

*Gary P. Gillum*, 137

## Death of a Daughter

A POEM

*Cara M. Bullinger*, 142

## Afterwords

*Thomas G. Alexander*, 143

## BOOK REVIEWS

Levi S. Peterson,

*Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*

INTRODUCTION TO REVIEWS BY

*Paul H. Peterson*, 115

REVIEWED BY

*Newell G. Bringham*, 117

*Maureen U. Beecher*, 123

*Louis C. Midgley*, 127

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## Guest Editor's Introduction

David J. Whittaker

Following their initial exodus from Nauvoo, the Mormons spent the winter of 1846–47 in settlements along both sides of the Missouri River, near present-day Omaha, Nebraska. In the spring of 1847, Brigham Young led the next stage of their westward movement, arriving himself on 24 July in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. A new phase of Mormon history had begun. The essays assembled in this issue of *BYU Studies* take a closer look at the early years, focusing particularly on the first decade.

When the Mormons entered the Great Basin, the area they chose to settle in was technically owned by Mexico. Shortly after they arrived, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), ending the Mexican War and transferring the land the Mormons were settling on to U.S. ownership, was signed. The Latter-day Saints sought control over their own affairs by applying for statehood. The events surrounding this attempt is the subject of Peter Crawley's essay. It sheds new light on their initial quest for self-government and thereby on western statemaking.

Of course the land that was organized into Utah Territory in 1850 was not vacant when the Mormons arrived. Native Americans had inhabited the region for centuries, and an important dimension of the Mormon pioneer experience was their relationship with the natives. It is to this area that Ronald Walker directs our attention by suggesting new perspectives as well as fruitful avenues for new research.

The early years were hard ones for those who chose to settle in Utah. Not all did. Focusing on one specific colony, Leo Lyman gives important insights into the San Bernardino settlement, paying particular attention to the area as an outpost of dissent during the formative years of Mormon Utah.

While the Great Basin provided some isolation for persecuted Mormons, trouble followed them west. Problems with federally appointed officials began in 1851 and grew in magnitude until

President Buchanan ordered federal troops to march against Utah in 1857. The subsequent events of the Utah War or “Buchanan’s Blunder” were diffused by 1858, but the large army was stationed in Utah for the next three years. Richard Poll’s essay, part of his larger projected history of the Utah War, focuses on the Move South, a time when Brigham Young ordered the abandonment of the Salt Lake Valley while the army marched through on its way to what became Camp Floyd. In addition to important new details, Dr. Poll suggests what some of the consequences were for Mormon society.

Finally, my own essay looks at a little-known product of the early Mormon press, the almanac. The essay examines the context and content of these publications and thereby invites a closer look at the cultural milieu of early Utah.



# The Constitution of the State of Deseret

Peter Crawley

For the collector of Utahiana, the 1849 Kanesville *Constitution of the State of Deseret* is a fascinating book. It is the founding document of government in the Intermountain West; it is one of the first books published in Kanesville, Iowa; and it is a great rarity.

It is also one of the primary sources for the history of the beginning of government in the Great Basin. The standard versions of this story are perplexing, for they describe two concurrent, parallel efforts on the part of the Mormons to obtain a territorial government and to obtain statehood. And the question has persisted, why did the Mormons make competing, apparently independent applications for the two forms of government? The reason for this perplexity now seems clear; for, as I will argue below, *Constitution of the State of Deseret* describes events that did not take place and conveys impressions that were not justified. Which, of course, makes the book that much more intriguing.

With the exception of Utah, the western states were settled by every kind of adventurous soul, each drawn across the overland trail by his own particular vision. Manifest Destiny and the American Dream quickened the step of these pioneers. Individual enterprise was their guiding principle. Utah, on the other hand, was settled by Mormons whose visions were of Zion, not El Dorado. Cooperation, sacrifice, and obedience were Mormon guiding principles; the society they would build in the tops of the mountains was the focus of their commitments.

In contrast to the other western states, the basic structures that in one guise or another would govern in Utah were already in place before the Mormons entered the Great Salt Lake Valley in July 1847. These were the principal councils of the Church instituted in Ohio and Illinois many years before the move to the West. When the Mormons first pushed into the valley, the Council of the Twelve Apostles presided over the Church; the First Presidency had not yet been reorganized following the death of Joseph Smith. Six months

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Peter Crawley is a professor of mathematics at Brigham Young University. This essay, prepared in commemoration of the two millionth volume acquired by the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, was originally published in *Friends of the Library Newsletter*, no. 19 (1982). It is reprinted here by permission.



later, however, after Brigham Young and most of the Twelve had returned to Winter Quarters (now Florence, Nebraska, near Omaha), the First Presidency were formally sustained, with Brigham Young as president and Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards counselors.<sup>1</sup> All of the First Presidency and the Twelve belonged to the Council of Fifty, a body of about fifty men formed by Joseph Smith just before his death. Influential only insofar as the First Presidency and the Twelve allowed it to be, the Council of Fifty helped organize the exodus from Illinois and would serve for a time as a governing agency in the Salt Lake Valley.<sup>2</sup>

Five weeks after they reached the valley, Brigham Young and seven others of the Twelve turned back to Winter Quarters. On 5 September, near South Pass, they met another Mormon company heading for Salt Lake, of which John Smith, uncle of Joseph Smith, was a member. The next day the eight Apostles met with the officers of the two companies and nominated a presidency, a high council, and a marshal for Great Salt Lake City. John Smith was selected as president; Charles C. Rich and John Young were suggested as counselors. Henry G. Sherwood, Thomas Grover, Levi Jackman, John Murdock, Daniel Spencer, Lewis Abbott, Ira Eldredge, Edson Whipple, Shadrach Roundy, John Vance, Willard Snow, and Abraham O. Smoot were nominated for the high council.<sup>3</sup> On 3 October, a Church conference in the Salt Lake Valley formally sustained these officers, along with John Van Cott as marshal.<sup>4</sup>

For almost a year the responsibility for governing the Salt Lake pioneer colony rested with this high council, and with two Apostles, Parley P. Pratt and John Taylor, who remained in the valley and exerted considerable influence over the affairs of the community.<sup>5</sup> The high council drafted laws, levied taxes, apportioned land to the settlers, issued water and timber rights, located a cemetery, and imposed fines and punishments for criminal offenses.<sup>6</sup> When Brigham Young returned to the valley in September 1848, these civil responsibilities passed to the Council of Fifty, and on 6 January 1849 the high council was formally relieved of its municipal duties.<sup>7</sup> For another year the Council of Fifty met weekly at the house of Heber C. Kimball and directed the affairs of the colony. John D. Lee's diaries make it clear that the Apostles were far and away the most influential members of the council, especially Brigham Young, whose presence dominated the meetings.<sup>8</sup> This simple, practical form of government served the fledgling community well, and the early legislative decisions of the high council and Council of Fifty established precedents that would channel the deliberations of later territorial legislators. Had the



Mormons not lived in the middle of the United States, had they not faced the necessity of sooner or later coming to terms with the federal government, they likely could have survived for years with a government no more formal than the Council of Fifty.

But from the beginning the Mormons expected to engage the federal government. As early as December 1847—six weeks before the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—the Twelve declared their intention to petition for a territorial government in the Great Basin “as soon as circumstances will permit.”<sup>9</sup> One year later they took a first step. On 9 December 1848, shortly after it began meeting in the valley, the Council of Fifty voted to petition Congress for territorial status. It appointed a committee to gather signatures for the petition, and it proposed a slate of territorial officers: Brigham Young, governor; Willard Richards, secretary; Heber C. Kimball, chief judge; Newel K. Whitney and Parley P. Pratt, associate judges; and John M. Bernhisel, marshal. Here the council discussed the chief concern of the Mormons as they moved toward a more formal government: their determination to be governed by their own leaders and their abhorrence of unsympathetic carpetbag appointees who might be sent to the new territory. Here also it gave the territory a uniquely Mormon name, taken from the Book of Mormon, to symbolize industry: Deseret.<sup>10</sup>

The next day Thomas Bullock, secretary to Brigham Young and to the Council of Fifty, began collecting signatures for the petition—before it was composed. On 11 December, Willard Richards dictated the text of a petition to Bullock. Two days later Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Richards, Bullock, and several others read over a number of memorials drafted by other states and finally settled on the one dictated by Richards. This petition was presented to the Council of Fifty on 16 December and presented again to the council on 6 January, when John M. Bernhisel was appointed to take it to Washington.<sup>11</sup> Bernhisel was a happy choice. A physician, sophisticated and socially adept, he would promote the Mormon cause in the nation’s capital with devotion and skill.

Territorial officers were again discussed in the Council of Fifty on 4 March 1849, when a slightly modified slate was nominated by the council: Brigham Young, governor; Willard Richards, secretary of state; Heber C. Kimball, chief justice; Newel K. Whitney and John Taylor, associate judges; Horace S. Eldredge, marshal; Daniel H. Wells, attorney general; Albert Carrington, assessor and collector; Newel K. Whitney, treasurer; and Joseph L. Heywood, supervisor of roads. Further, the council voted to hold a general “election” on 12 March where the citizenry would be given



the opportunity to ratify this slate.<sup>12</sup> Such an "election," unthinkable in any other part of the United States, was typical in Mormonism: officers were nominated by the Church leaders and then presented to the lay members for their sustaining vote. Despite a heavy snowstorm, the election came off as scheduled; 674 votes were polled in favor of the ticket, none in opposition.<sup>13</sup>

On 22 March, Thomas Bullock began compiling the signatures for the petition to Congress. Five and a half weeks later, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards attached their autographs to the completed memorial, twenty-two feet long, totaling 2,270 signatures. Proposed for the new territory was an immense area including all of what is now Utah and Nevada, most of Arizona, three-quarters of New Mexico, two-thirds of Colorado, half of Wyoming, and a third of California, including a strip of the Pacific coast near San Diego.<sup>14</sup> Bullock handed the memorial to Bernhisel on 3 May, and Willard Richards blessed him "in the name of Israel's God." The following day Bernhisel left for Washington.<sup>15</sup>

At this point the narrative becomes more complicated. The standard histories of Utah describe a parallel effort on the part of the Mormons to gain the admission of the Great Basin region into the Union as an independent state, an effort that ran concurrently with and independently of their endeavor for territorial status. According to these histories, the attempt for statehood began in February 1849 when a notice, signed by "many citizens," was given out for a convention to be held at Great Salt Lake City on 5 March "for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of organizing a Territorial or State government." On 5 March, so the story goes, "a large portion of the inhabitants of that portion of Upper California, lying east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains," met at Great Salt Lake and organized into a convention, with Daniel Spencer chairman, and Thomas Bullock one of the secretaries. After the obligatory speeches, the chairman appointed a committee of ten men to draft a state constitution. On the eighth, the committee submitted a constitution for a proposed state of Deseret, which, after considerable debate, was adopted by the convention on the tenth. Two days later, the "election" discussed above took place. On 2 July 1849, pursuant to the provisions of the constitution, those elected to the House of Representatives of the proposed state of Deseret met in Great Salt Lake City, presented their credentials, and organized the House. Among those qualified as representatives were Charles Shumway, Joel H. Johnson, John Murdock, Isaac C. Haight, and Hosea Stout; John D. Lee was elected assistant clerk. That same day the Senate was organized. The House and Senate each met on the



third; and in joint session on the fifth they elected Almon W. Babbitt the delegate to the U.S. Congress. On the sixth, a select joint committee presented in the House a memorial to the U.S. Congress for the admission of the state of Deseret into the Union "on equal footing with other states"; it was accepted and referred to the Senate. The Senate approved this memorial on 9 July. Eighteen days later, Babbitt left for Washington carrying the constitution and memorial for statehood.<sup>16</sup>

A single source is the basis for this account of the 5–10 March constitutional convention and the 2–9 July session of the legislature—the printed *Constitution of the State of Deseret*. And as one examines the constitution with the foregoing account in mind, certain inconsistencies appear. The constitution stipulates that a general election for state officers and members of the legislature be held on 7 May 1849. But a general election was held on 12 March, two days after the convention adjourned, and there is no record of any election being held on 7 May. Further, the constitution provides for the office of lieutenant governor, and *Constitution of the State of Deseret* reports that Brigham Young had been elected governor, with Heber C. Kimball, lieutenant governor; Willard Richards, secretary of state; William Clayton, auditor of public accounts; and Joseph L. Heywood, treasurer. This set of officers, of course, is different from the set elected on 12 March, which did not include a lieutenant governor. No legislators were elected on 12 March; yet *Constitution of the State of Deseret* lists thirty members of the House and fourteen members of the Senate. How these were selected is not explained. The constitution specifies that the chief and associate justices be elected by joint vote of the House and Senate, yet these three judges were "elected" by the citizenry in the election of 12 March.

When one examines manuscript sources, the inconsistencies multiply. No contemporary diary has been found that mentions the March constitutional convention or the July session of the legislature. John D. Lee, purportedly assistant clerk of the House, and faithful chronicler of the Council of Fifty, has a diary entry for 5 March 1849 dealing with the "great wolf hunt," a contest involving about a hundred men to rid the valley of predators. No reference to a constitutional convention is made here, in his entry for 6 March, or in the next entry for 10 March, which gives a detailed summary of the meeting of the Council of Fifty. Lee's entry for 1 July 1849 talks about the California emigration; there are no entries for 2–10 July.<sup>17</sup> Daniel Spencer, chairman of the constitutional convention, summarizes in his diary the "things of some importance" that transpired between 21 February and 12 March 1849, but reports



only two: an attempt to quell Indian depredations, and the 12 March election, for which he was a judge. There is no hint of a constitutional convention.<sup>18</sup> Thomas Bullock is listed in *Constitution of the State of Deseret* as a secretary of the convention. Bullock's diary, however, does not mention this. It does note that on 5 March Brigham Young stopped by the office on his way to a nearby fort; that on 8 March Bullock was in the office all day numbering bank notes and posting the bankbooks, Heber C. Kimball was still up in Mill Canyon preaching, and many had gone up into Mill Canyon to get out timber; that Kimball returned from Mill Canyon in a heavy snowstorm on the ninth; and that the Council of Fifty met at Kimball's on the tenth. One would expect Bullock not to omit an important political event like the convention, for his diary contains detailed references to the election of 12 March, his recount of the votes on 21 March, his work on the memorial for territorial status between 30 April and 3 May, and his efforts in getting Bernhisel ready for his trip 1–3 May.<sup>19</sup> The fact that a territorial government, not statehood, was in the minds of the Council of Fifty on 12 March 1849 is indicated in Bullock's minutes, which report Willard Snow saying at the opening of the election, "We contemplate petitioning Congress for a Ter. Govt. to be ext[ended] over us. We may or may not get it."<sup>20</sup>

For the July legislative session, the diary record is less illuminating but still casts doubt on the report in *Constitution of the State of Deseret*. Charles Shumway, reported to have taken his seat in the House, was actually at the Upper Platte Ferry at the time the legislature was supposed to have met.<sup>21</sup> Isaac C. Haight, listed as a member of the House, comments on the California emigration, crops, and the warm weather in a diary entry for 1 July 1849 but mentions no legislative session the next day.<sup>22</sup> The diaries of Joel H. Johnson, John Murdock, and Hosea Stout suggest that the first session of the legislature actually convened in December, not in July. Johnson records that he was elected a member of the House, "the first session of which commenced its setting on the eighth day of December 1849."<sup>23</sup> Murdock's entry for 6 December 1849 reads: "Received notice from Geo. D. Grant, Sergeant at Arms, of my appointment by the Governor as a member of the House of Representatives for the State of Deseret. On the 8th I took my seat accordingly."<sup>24</sup> Hosea Stout's entry for 2 July 1849, the day he was supposed to have been qualified as a member of the House, reads simply, "Around town." For 4 December 1849, he records: "On Tues Evening I received a notification to meet the House of Representatives on Sat next I being a member of the Body. By what process I became a Representative I know not."<sup>25</sup>



An entry in the journal of Franklin D. Richards, one of the Twelve, clarifies this picture a bit: "Thursday July 19th 1849. Attended Council the two weeks past, at which the Memorial[,] Constitution of the State of Deseret, Journal of its Legislature, Bill or Declaration of Rights, and the election of A. W. Babbitt as delegate to Congress, was all accomplished."<sup>26</sup> Consistent with this entry is Willard Richards's official certification as secretary of state on the last page of *Constitution of the State of Deseret*, which bears the date 19 July 1849. In addition, the LDS Church Archives contain a series of drafts of the constitution, the memorial to Congress, and the report of the July legislative session, some with corrections in Thomas Bullock's characteristic handwriting. One of these is docketed in Bullock's hand, 10 July 1849. Two other copies are docketed July 1849.

All of this evidence combines to suggest that what actually happened is this: The effort in the valley to petition for territorial status, beginning with the 9 December 1848 meeting of the Council of Fifty and culminating with Bernhisel's departure on 4 May 1849, proceeded as we have described it above—with no serious action in the direction of statehood. The 5–10 March 1849 constitutional convention did not occur. On 4 May 1849, as Bernhisel left Great Salt Lake City, the expectation of the Mormons was simply to apply for a territorial government and lobby for the appointment of its officers from among the leaders of the Church.

Then on 1 July 1849, Almon W. Babbitt arrived in Great Salt Lake City with the eastern mail.<sup>27</sup> At this point there seems to have been a clear shift in the thinking of the Church leaders toward statehood rather than territorial status. Why such a shift occurred is not apparent. It is conceivable that Babbitt himself influenced the Church authorities to apply for statehood. Babbitt had had some political experience in Iowa—including an acrimonious dispute with Apostle Orson Hyde, the presiding authority at Winter Quarters and Kanesville (now Council Bluffs, Iowa).<sup>28</sup> His subsequent performance in Washington, D.C., tempts one to conjecture that he viewed an application for statehood as an opportunity to further his own political ambitions. It is clear that Babbitt carried some influence in the valley. He was the principal speaker along with Brigham Young at the Sunday worship service on 8 July, and the main speaker again on 15 July.<sup>29</sup> More indicative than this, he was chosen the state of Deseret's delegate to Congress in spite of the fact that he had been on the wrong side of a political fight with a member of the Twelve. In any event, the Mormons' anxiety over the possibility of unsympathetic territorial appointees certainly played a part in their shift toward statehood.



It also seems clear that the constitution of the state of Deseret was composed between 1 July and 18 July 1849. What are reported in *Constitution of the State of Deseret* as formal sessions of the House and Senate on 2–9 July were more likely a series of informal meetings involving certain members of the Council of Fifty, where the constitution and memorial to Congress were drafted, the members of the House and Senate were selected, and Babbitt was designated the delegate to the U.S. Congress.

A flurry of letters from the First Presidency, beginning with two to Orson Hyde, signaled this shift toward statehood. The first, written 19 July 1849, announced their intention to seek the admission of Deseret into the Union as a sovereign state and their choice of Babbitt as delegate—a presumably bitter pill for Orson Hyde.<sup>30</sup> The second, a confidential letter written on 20 July, urged Hyde to bury his differences with Babbitt and cooperate with him in the effort for statehood.<sup>31</sup> That same day the First Presidency wrote to Oliver Cowdery (who had just been rebaptized in Kanesville after eleven years away from the Church), asking him to join forces with Babbitt.<sup>32</sup> On 24 and 25 July, they posted three other letters—each announcing the effort for statehood and urging cooperation with Babbitt—to Nathaniel H. Felt in St. Louis, to Apostle Wilford Woodruff in the eastern states, and, of particular importance, to Thomas L. Kane, a man well connected in the capital and a staunch ally of the Mormons.<sup>33</sup>

Why the fictions of the March constitutional convention and the July session of the legislature? The obvious answer is that Congress would not have considered an application that had not been produced by a constituent convention and ratified by popular election. In the case of the Salt Lake Mormons, there were additional ramifications. If indeed the decision to press for statehood was reached after 1 July, then time was a problem. Congress would convene within five months, and there was not sufficient time to follow the traditional procedure of calling for a constituent convention, drafting a constitution, holding a ratifying election, and getting the petition to Washington. The Council of Fifty must have viewed these procedures as irrelevant as well. When Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards were sustained as the First Presidency at Winter Quarters in December 1847 and again in the Salt Lake Valley in October 1848, the will of the Mormon people was expressed that these men govern—in whatever manner they deemed suitable; any other expression of this nature was essentially superfluous. On the other hand, the council undoubtedly was concerned with how a petition from Mormons, who had been plagued by charges of political



misconduct for fifteen years, would be received by Congress. The council must have feared that any suggestion of a departure from traditional political procedures would jeopardize their application. *Constitution of the State of Deseret* reflects an almost obsessive concern with procedure. Where *Constitution of the State of Iowa* (1846)—upon which the constitution of Deseret was modeled—states little more than the fact of a constituent convention, *Constitution of the State of Deseret* prints the text of a call for a convention issued 1 February, day-by-day minutes of a convention 5–10 March, results of an election 7 May, and day-by-day minutes of an organizing session of the legislature 2–9 July. In this light, then, *Constitution of the State of Deseret* was as much a public relations piece as an application for statehood, a document designed to show that the traditional American political processes were alive and well in Deseret.

Although the federal constitution was the ultimate prototype, there is little doubt that the constitution of Deseret was derived from the Iowa constitution of 1846.<sup>34</sup> Fifty-seven of the sixty-seven sections are taken from the Iowa constitution, in most cases word for word. The area proposed in the preamble for the state of Deseret, though a bit smaller than that proposed for the territory, still included virtually all of what is now Nevada and Utah, most of Arizona, much of Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico, parts of Oregon and Idaho, and a third of California, including a stretch of the Pacific coast near San Diego.<sup>35</sup>

Eight articles comprise the primary text of the constitution. Article 1 divides the powers of government between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Articles 2–4 outline the structure, limits, organization, and procedures of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches respectively. Some intriguing differences exist between the Iowa and Deseret constitutions. Biennial sessions of the legislature are specified in the Iowa constitution; annual sessions are stipulated in the Deseret constitution. The Iowa constitution requires that members of the House be at least twenty-one years old, senators at least twenty-five, and the governor at least thirty; in the Deseret constitution these age limits are twenty-five, thirty, and thirty-five, thus conforming more closely to the federal constitution. On the other hand, the Iowa constitution requires that revenue bills originate in the House while no such restriction appears in the constitution of Deseret. The Deseret constitution provides for the office of lieutenant governor; the Iowa constitution specifies that the secretary of state is the second executive office. The Supreme Court is designated an appellate court in the Iowa constitution; there is essentially no



restriction on the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in the Deseret constitution.

Article 5 deals with elections, setting "the first Monday in May next," 7 May 1849, as the first election for state officers and legislators and for the ratification of the constitution. Article 6 provides for a militia of "all able bodied, white, male citizens, between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years." No provision is made for exemption from service in the militia because of a conscientious objection to bearing arms, as there is in the Iowa constitution. Article 7 outlines the process for amending the constitution. Article 8 is a declaration of rights that enumerates the traditional freedoms, such as the rights of religious worship, free speech, and trial by jury, freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, the prohibition of bills of attainder and ex post facto laws, etc. No reference is made to slavery. Nor does the constitution provide for the remuneration of legislators or state officers, except the governor.

At the time they drafted the constitution and memorial, the Church leaders ordered two thousand copies printed for distribution to the president and each member of Congress.<sup>36</sup> A printing press had not yet been brought into the Salt Lake Valley, but Orson Hyde was operating one in Kanesville.<sup>37</sup> So on 27 July 1849 Babbitt started east with a manuscript copy of the constitution, expecting to pause in Kanesville while the constitution was printed there.

The year before, Hyde had journeyed to the East Coast to raise money for a press. With eight hundred dollars borrowed in Washington, D.C., he purchased type, fixtures, and a printing press from the Cincinnati Type Foundry. By mid-November he was back in Kanesville setting up his printing shop and waiting for his printer, John Gooch, to arrive from St. Louis.<sup>38</sup> On 7 February 1849, Hyde and Gooch issued the first number of a semimonthly newspaper, the *Frontier Guardian*, which for the next sixteen months was the only Mormon periodical published in the United States. Ironically, it was this press that precipitated Hyde's dispute with Babbitt. As Hyde was traveling east in the summer of 1848, Babbitt offered to buy a press for him if he would publicly endorse Lewis Cass, the Democratic candidate for president. Hyde refused, asserting that he would go with Zachary Taylor, "press or no press."<sup>39</sup> Babbitt reached Kanesville on 3 September 1849.<sup>40</sup> *Constitution of the State of Deseret* was undoubtedly printed soon thereafter.

John M. Bernhisel's trip to the nation's capital occupied six months, during which he filled his mind with the politics of the day. In October he reached New York City, to be greeted there by a letter from the First Presidency informing him of their decision to apply



for statehood.<sup>41</sup> Five weeks later Bernhisel and Wilford Woodruff called on Thomas Kane in Philadelphia. Kane, of course, knew of the First Presidency's decision, and he urged Bernhisel in the strongest terms to work for the admission of Deseret as a state. "You are better without any government from the hands of Congress than with a Territorial government," he declared.

The political intrigues of government officers will be against you. You can govern yourselves better than they can govern you. I would prefer to see you withdraw the bill, rather than to have a Territorial government, for if you are defeated in the State government, you can fall back upon it again at another session, if you have not a Territorial government; but if you have, you cannot apply for a state government for a number of years. I insist upon it[;] you do not want corrupt political men from Washington strutting around you, with military epaulettes, and dress, who will speculate out of you all they can.<sup>42</sup>

Bernhisel arrived in Washington on 30 November, Babbitt the next day. On 3 December the first session of the Thirty-first Congress convened, and on the twenty-seventh Stephen A. Douglas presented Deseret's memorial for statehood to the Senate. Here he asked that Deseret be admitted either as a state or as a territory, according to the will of Congress. The memorial was presented to the House on 3 January, and Babbitt's petition to be seated in the House as the delegate from Deseret was referred to the committee on elections on 28 January.<sup>43</sup> But secession was in the air, and the wishes of two or three thousand Mormons isolated in the Great Basin were of small concern to a Congress battling to keep the Union from disintegrating. Although Bernhisel would lobby tirelessly in her behalf, the fate of Deseret was determined by the flood of events that would culminate in the Compromise of 1850.<sup>44</sup>

The central problem was slavery, more particularly the extension of slavery into the new western region acquired as a result of the Mexican War. Six issues confronted the Congress: statehood for California; statehood or territorial governments for Deseret and New Mexico; a dispute over the western boundary of Texas—a slave state; the abolition of slavery in Washington, D.C.; and a demand from southern congressmen for a stricter fugitive slave law.

Congress divided almost equally along party lines. Sixty-three ballots were taken before the Democrats finally organized the House of Representatives. The Senate split into four almost equal factions: northern Whigs, led by William H. Seward and southern Democrat Thomas Hart Benton, who advocated the exclusion of slavery from the West; most of the southern Democrats, led by John C. Calhoun and Jefferson Davis, who insisted on slavery's



extension to some part of the new region; nearly all of the northern Democrats and a few southern Democrats, led by Lewis Cass and Stephen A. Douglas, who proposed compromise on the basis of "popular sovereignty," allowing each territory to decide its own position on slavery; and almost all southern Whigs and two northern Whigs, led by Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, who tended toward popular sovereignty. Here the three giants—Clay, Webster, and Calhoun—appeared together on the Senate stage for the last time.

Vitriolic discussions of the extension of slavery and slavery in the nation's capital filled the opening weeks. But no faction had sufficient strength in both houses to achieve its objectives. A break in this impasse came on 29 January 1850 when Henry Clay delivered his great speech in the Senate that outlined the basic ideas that ultimately would form the compromise. Clay proposed to admit California as a free state; provide territorial governments for Deseret and New Mexico with no restriction or conditions regarding slavery; reduce the area of Texas and pay off her debt; allow slavery in Washington, D.C., but abolish the slave trade there; and pass a more stringent fugitive slave law. Clay's speech marked the opening of one of the great debates in the history of the Senate, a debate that would stretch over eight months and include the final Senate addresses of Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun.

Early in March, at the instigation of H. S. Foote, the Senate formed a committee of thirteen to pass upon the sectional problems and unite Clay's proposals into a single bill—afterward called the "Omnibus Bill." That month Bernhisel had a series of interviews with Stephen A. Douglas, who, as chairman of the Senate committee on territories, was an especially influential friend. Douglas disliked the name "Deseret" and insisted on the name of "Utah." He also indicated that Congress would substantially reduce the proposed boundaries of Deseret.<sup>45</sup> At a subsequent interview, Bernhisel inquired about withdrawing the Mormons' application. Douglas responded that this would make little difference, "for Congress deemed it their duty to organize the territories, and that both the great political parties were of the opinion that the question which now agitates Congress, and the nation from one end to the other, could not be settled until the territories were organized." To Bernhisel's question concerning the prospect for officers for a territorial government, Douglas replied that there was little chance a member of the First Presidency or the Council of the Twelve would be appointed.<sup>46</sup>

As the session dragged into May and June, Zachary Taylor continued firm in his opposition to Clay's proposals. The president



differed with Clay primarily in his solution to the Texas boundary problem and his insistence on statehood for New Mexico, and it was apparent that without a softening of his position the Omnibus had little chance. Then on 9 July Zachary Taylor died. Millard Fillmore ascended to the presidency; Webster was appointed his secretary of state; Clay became the unofficial White House spokesman. The administration was now clearly behind the Omnibus Bill. On 31 July the Omnibus was before the Senate, and passage seemed certain. Without warning, its opponents rose to tear at the bill. First came opposition to the New Mexico component; the Senate responded by voting this out. Texas fell under attack next; a vote of the Senate removed all parts relating to Texas. David R. Atchison—Joseph Smith's lawyer in Missouri—who had sided with the compromisers, now moved that California statehood be eliminated; this proposal was quickly accepted. "The Omnibus is overturned," exulted Thomas Hart Benton, "and all the passengers spilled out but one. We have but Utah left—all gone but Utah! It alone remains, and I am for saving it as a monument of the herculean labors of the immortal thirteen." Thirty-two of the fifty senators remaining in the chamber agreed, and the bill creating Utah Territory passed the Senate the next day. Stephen A. Douglas now stepped into the leadership of the compromisers, and between 9 August and 16 September he directed five separate bills through the Senate that embodied the aims of the Omnibus. The Omnibus passed the House in five separate bills between 6 and 17 September, a territorial government for Utah passing on 7 September. On 9 September, Fillmore signed Utah Territory into law.

Bernhisel's skill as a lobbyist now became particularly important as Fillmore began to consider appointments for the new territory. Between 10 and 16 September he had several discussions with the president, and on the latter date he handed Fillmore his recommendation for Brigham Young, governor; Willard Richards, secretary; Zerubbabel Snow, a Mormon from Ohio, chief justice; Heber C. Kimball and Newel K. Whitney, associate justices; Seth M. Blair, attorney; and Joseph L. Heywood, marshal. At this meeting Bernhisel repeated what had been from the beginning the Mormons' principal concern: "The people of Utah cannot but consider it their right, as American citizens, to be governed by men of their own choice, entitled to their confidence, and united with them in opinion and feeling." Four days later the president announced his decision. The officers for the new territory of Utah would be Brigham Young, governor; Broughton D. Harris of Vermont, secretary; Joseph Buffington of Pennsylvania, chief justice; Zerubbabel Snow of Ohio and Perry C. Brocchus of



Alabama, associate justices; Seth M. Blair of Utah, U.S. attorney; and Joseph L. Heywood of Utah, U.S. marshal. Stephen A. Douglas, six months before, had underestimated the ability and tenacity of John M. Bernhisel.<sup>47</sup>

In the meantime the Council of Fifty met weekly throughout 1849 and continued to direct the municipal affairs of the Salt Lake community. Its last legislative action seems to have occurred on 29 December 1849 when it passed an ordinance creating a recorder of "marks and brands."<sup>48</sup>

The first true session of the legislature of the provisional state of Deseret convened early in December 1849 and met intermittently until it recessed in March 1850. A second session sat from 4 July to 5 October 1850. News of the Utah bill reached the valley on 15 October, and the full text of the act creating Utah Territory was printed in the *Deseret News* of 30 November. Consequently the third session of the legislature of Deseret was known to be the last when it convened on 2 December 1850. This legislature passed its final ordinance, a law "to suppress gaming," on 24 February 1851; and by joint resolution on 28 March it brought the state of Deseret to an end. Brigham Young took the oath of office as governor of the new territory from Daniel H. Wells, chief justice of the provisional state of Deseret, on 3 February 1851. The territorial appointees from outside of Utah arrived in the valley during June, July, and August. And on 22 September 1851 the first legislature of the territory of Utah convened in Great Salt Lake City. Twelve days later, by joint resolution of the territorial legislature, the laws of the provisional state of Deseret were legalized as territorial statutes.<sup>49</sup>

Because of the confusion surrounding the chronology of events in the Mormons' effort for statehood, a number of interpretations of this episode appear in the published histories of Utah. Recent histories conjecture that this effort was really an attempt to establish the political kingdom of God, the millennial world order that would govern at the Second Coming.<sup>50</sup> But this idea does not appear in the discussions of the Council of Fifty or the correspondence among Church officials. What does emerge from these sources is a single, practical concern: to be governed by their own. Bernhisel's correspondence makes it clear that the particular form of government was not important to the Mormons; a continuation of the provisional state of Deseret, statehood, or even a territorial government was acceptable if the officials were chosen from among the leaders of the Church.<sup>51</sup> Thus at its fundamental level, *Constitution of the State of Deseret* was a plea for the most venerable of all American rights, the right of a free people to be governed by those of their own choosing.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>T. Edgar Lyon, "Nauvoo and the Council of the Twelve," in F. Mark McKiernan et al., eds., *The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973), 167–205; D. Michael Quinn, "The Evolution of the Presiding Quorums of the LDS Church," *Journal of Mormon History* 1 (1974): 21–28.

<sup>2</sup>D. Michael Quinn, "The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844 to 1945," *Brigham Young University Studies* 20 (1980): 163–97. Compare Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967).

<sup>3</sup>Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 September 1847, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 3 October 1847.

<sup>5</sup>John Nebeker, "Early Justice in Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 3 (October 1930): 88.

<sup>6</sup>A detailed summary of the activities of the high council during this period is given in Dale L. Morgan, "The State of Deseret," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 8 (April 1940): 65–239.

<sup>7</sup>Journal History, 6 January 1849.

<sup>8</sup>Robert G. Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848–1876*, 2 vols. (San Marino, Calif.: Huntington Library, 1955), 1:80–114 (hereafter cited as *Lee Diaries*).

<sup>9</sup>*General Epistle from the Council of the Twelve Apostles, to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Abroad, Dispersed throughout the Earth* (St. Louis: N.p., 1848), 4.

<sup>10</sup>*Lee Diaries* 1:80–81. The problem of carpetbag appointees is discussed in two letters from the Mormon settlements on the Missouri River: G. A. Smith and E. T. Benson to B. Young, 10 October 1848; and E. M. Green to Young, 7 October 1848; both in Journal History under the respective dates.

<sup>11</sup>Journal History, 10–11, 13 December 1848; *Lee Diaries* 1:81–82, 86; and Thomas Bullock, Diary, 10–11, 13 December 1848, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>12</sup>Journal History, 4 March 1849; *Lee Diaries* 1:98–99.

<sup>13</sup>Journal History, 12 March 1849; Bullock, Diary, 12, 21 March 1849.

<sup>14</sup>Bullock, Diary, 22 March and 30 April 1849; Journal History, 30 April 1849. The exact description of the proposed territory is that area "lying between Oregon and Mexico, and between the Sierra Nevada and the 27th degree longitude west of Washington W. L.," that is, the area bounded as follows: commencing at the crossing of the Rio Grande and the 32° north latitude to the Pacific Ocean; thence along the coast northward to the crossing of the 119° west longitude; thence north on the 119° west longitude to the Sierra Nevada Mountains; thence continuing along the summit of the Sierra Nevada to the 42° north latitude; thence running east "by the southern boundary of Oregon" to the Green River; thence north up the main channel of the Green River to the 43° north latitude; thence east to the 104° west longitude; thence south along this longitude to 38° north latitude; thence west on this latitude to the Rio Grande; thence south down the main channel of the Rio Grande to the 32° north latitude.

<sup>15</sup>Bullock, Diary, 1–4 May 1849; Journal History, 4 May 1849.

<sup>16</sup>The most detailed version is given in Morgan, "State of Deseret," 84–91. Compare Richard D. Poll et al., eds., *Utah's History* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 156–57.

<sup>17</sup>*Lee Diaries* 1:100–101, 110.

<sup>18</sup>Daniel Spencer, Diary, 21 February to 12 March 1849, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>19</sup>Bullock, Diary, 5 March to 3 May 1849.

<sup>20</sup>"Thomas Bullock Minutes," 12 March 1849, LDS Church Archives. Willard Snow was a member of the Council of Fifty.

<sup>21</sup>Kenneth W. Godfrey, *Charles Shumway: A Pioneer's Life* (Provo: J. G. Stevenson, 1974), 49–50.

<sup>22</sup>"Biographical Sketch and Diary of Isaac Chauncey Haight," 52–53, typescript, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Lee Library).

<sup>23</sup>"Diary of Joel Hills Johnson," 35, typescript, Lee Library.

<sup>24</sup>"An Abridged Record of the Life of John Murdock, Taken from His Journal by Himself," 44, typescript, Lee Library.

<sup>25</sup>Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 2:354, 358 (hereafter cited as *Stout Diary*).

<sup>26</sup>Franklin D. Richards, Journal, 19 July 1849, typescript, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>27</sup>*Stout Diary* 2:354; Journal History, 1 July 1849.

<sup>28</sup>J. Keith Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History*, Charles E. Merrill Monograph Series, no. 2 (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1967), 20–37.

<sup>29</sup>Journal History, 8, 15 July 1849.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 19 July 1849.

<sup>31</sup>The First Presidency to Orson Hyde, 20 July 1849, quoted in Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History*, 59 n. 45.



<sup>32</sup>Journal History, 20 July 1849.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 24–25 July 1849.

<sup>34</sup>*Constitution of the State of Iowa, Adopted in Convention, May 18, 1846*, 29th Cong., 1st sess., S. Doc. 384, 10 June 1846.

<sup>35</sup>The exact boundaries are “commencing at the 33 degree of North Latitude where it crosses the 108 degree of Longitude, West of Greenwich; thence running South and West to, and down the main channel of the Gila River, on the Northern line of Mexico, and on the Northern boundary of Lower California to the Pacific Ocean; thence along the coast North Westerly to 118 degrees 30 minutes of West Longitude; thence North to where said line intersects the dividing ridge of the Sierra Nevada Mountains; thence North along the summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the dividing range of mountains that separates the waters flowing into the Columbia River, from the waters running into the Great Basin; thence Easterly, along the dividing range of mountains that separates said waters flowing into the Columbia River on the north, from the waters flowing into the Great Basin on the south, to the summit of the Wind River chain of Mountains; thence South East and South, by the dividing range of mountains that separate the waters flowing into the Gulf of Mexico from the waters flowing into the Gulf of California; to the place of beginning, as set forth in a map drawn by Charles Preuss, and published by order of the Senate of the United States, in 1848.”

<sup>36</sup>*Constitution of the State of Deseret*, 15.

<sup>37</sup>Actually some small bank notes had been printed in the valley in January 1849 on a small greeting-card press made by Truman O. Angell, which was not large enough to do book printing. The Ramage press that ultimately printed the *Deseret News* was purchased in Boston by W. W. Phelps and brought to Winter Quarters in November 1847. It remained there unassembled and crated until April 1849, when it was transported to the valley by Howard Egan. Egan arrived in the valley on 7 August. The press was unpacked by Brigham H. Young, Brigham Young’s nephew, in September 1849, about the same time *Constitution of the State of Deseret* was being printed in Kanesville.

<sup>38</sup>Journal History, 5 April 1849, 5–8; 15 October 1849; and 16 November 1849; *Millennial Star* 11:52; *Frontier Guardian*, 7 February 1849, 2; Douglas C. McMurtrie, “The First Printing at Council Bluffs,” *Annals of Iowa* 18 (1931): 2–11. John Gooch, twenty-four years old at the time Hyde employed him, had been a member of the Boston Branch of the LDS church and a printer there four years earlier. He compiled and printed the tract *Death of the Prophets Joseph and Hyrum Smith* (Boston, 1844).

<sup>39</sup>Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History*, 20–37.

<sup>40</sup>Journal History, 3 September 1849.

<sup>41</sup>Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History*, 65.

<sup>42</sup>Journal History, 26 November 1849.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 21 March 1850. The Senate and House printings of the memorial and constitution are, respectively: 31st Cong., 1st sess., S. Misc. Doc. 10; and 31st Cong., 1st sess., H. Misc. Doc. 18. The House subsequently rejected Babbitt’s petition (see 31st Cong., 1st sess., H. Rep. No. 219, 4 April 1850).

<sup>44</sup>Good accounts of Bernhisel’s activities in Washington are found in Morgan, “State of Deseret,” 113–32; and Melville, *Highlights in Mormon Political History*, 64–99. A standard work on the Compromise of 1850 is Holman Hamilton, *Prologue to Conflict* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1964).

<sup>45</sup>Journal History, 21 March 1850. Thomas Hart Benton also objected to the name *Deseret*. When formed in 1850, Utah Territory retained the western and eastern boundaries of Deseret, but the north boundary was set at the 42d parallel, and the southern boundary was raised to the 37th parallel.

<sup>46</sup>Journal History, 27 March 1850.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 12, 16 September, and 2 October 1850. Buffington declined the appointment as chief justice. In his place Lemuel G. Brandebury of Pennsylvania went to Utah as the first chief justice.

<sup>48</sup>This ordinance, together with eight others passed between 24 February and 24 November, was printed just after the first of the year in a four-page folded sheet entitled *Ordinances, Passed by the Legislative Council of Great Salt Lake City, and Ordered to Be Printed*. The passage of the first two of these ordinances by the Council of Fifty on 24 February and 17 March 1849 is recorded in *Lee Diaries* 1:94–96, 102.

<sup>49</sup>Morgan, “State of Deseret,” 83–113, gives a detailed summary of the legislatures of the state of Deseret. See also *Stout Diary* 2:358–406. Several Salt Lake imprints were produced by the activities of the provisional state of Deseret. Two ordinances passed by the Council of Fifty and fourteen passed by the first legislative session are printed, together with the constitution, in a thirty-four-page pamphlet bearing the caption title *Constitution of the State of Deseret*. The ordinances passed by the third legislative session are printed in an eighty-page book entitled *Ordinances Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Deseret*. Other imprints include a four-page petition concerning education entitled *To the General Assembly of the State of Deseret*, dated at end 8 February 1850; a twelve-page speech of Willard Richards on education, *Address. Willard Richards, Secretary of State; To the Chancellor and Regents of the University of the State of Deseret, Delivered in the Bowery, at Great Salt Lake City, in Pressence of His Excellency, Governor Young, April 17th, 1850*; and a three-page message of Brigham Young, *Governor’s Message; Deseret, December 2, 1850. To the Senators and Representatives of the State of Deseret*.

<sup>50</sup>See, for example, Poll, *Utah’s History*, 157.

<sup>51</sup>Bernhisel to B. Young, 21, 27 March 1850, Journal History.



# Toward a Reconstruction of Mormon and Indian Relations, 1847–1877

Ronald W. Walker

There are reminiscent stories about the last days of the Ute chief Black Hawk. Tormented by his several years' warpath and pillage, the physically broken warrior toured central and southern Utah asking forgiveness. At times, his rite bordered on self-flagellation. Tonsured at his request as an act of penance, he spoke of his obvious decline and of Brigham Young's dark prophecy that those who opposed the Saints would inevitably wither. Would the settlers, he asked, absolve him?<sup>1</sup>

At first I set the tableau aside. While aware of Black Hawk's conciliatory last travels, I thought stories of maledictions and penance were too pat and after the fact. But as my research continued, primary sources confirmed their outline. My experience, with a figure and episode of more than ordinary importance, suggests the incomplete and tentative nature of studies of Native Americans in the Brigham Young era. To be sure, much has been done. Consult the catalog of any large Utah or Mormon repository, and you will find an abundance of articles on Native Americans.<sup>2</sup> But the work is episodic and often uneven. At best scholars have illuminated perspectives rather than panoramas. Just to cite a few examples, we still wait for major studies of the Walker and Tintic wars—not to mention Utah Indian wars in general. We have neither monograph nor book on the Utah militia. With two or three exceptions, Indian biography, tribal surveys, and ecohistories have not been undertaken, at least in depth. Brigham Young's Indian dealing, his role as ex officio superintendent of Indian affairs, his directives relating to the Gunnison and Mountain Meadows massacres, and his ongoing relationship with Saint and Indian all require further study. Also needed are surveys dealing with government agents and policy, pertinent law, trading and commerce, the overlooked events of the last decade of Brigham Young's leadership, and Mormon-Indian relations, especially at the daily level of ordinary settlers and tribesmen. Above all, we need summary and synthesis.

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The length of this laundry list is surprising on at least two counts. Since mid-twentieth century, Mormon history has been a fruitful enterprise. Scores of increasingly sophisticated articles and books arrive each year, yet with short shrift rendered to Indian studies. In contrast, one need only scan the *Western Historical Quarterly's* articles and reviews to document that at the same time western and national historians have given dramatic and leading attention to the topic.

Is this disparity simply another indication of Mormon peculiarity and relative isolation? Western and national historians who have written on the Native Americans during the last several decades were influenced by a post-Vietnam, New Frontier legacy. Much of their writing is antiarmy, antiwar, and pro-environment, with an equal revulsion for colonization and racism.<sup>3</sup> Of course there have been broader currents. But even the more balanced treatments betray a climate of opinion, like twentieth-century historiography generally, that exults in cultural diversity and has little patience with ideology and absolute values.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps this is the reason why Mormon historians have largely allowed Native American studies to pass them by. Whatever its reputation in some quarters, the tenor of Mormon studies, at least from a national perspective, has been bland and conservative. We have been more prone to introspection than to challenge and protest. This inward tendency in turn has limited our attention to cultures different from our own.

But the most inhibiting factor to the study of Mormon-Indian relations probably lies in the usual historical interpretation of the Mormon experience with the Native American. Since pioneer times, Mormons have seen their acts toward the Indian as kindly and well meaning, and the majority of Mormon historians when crafting an occasional chapter or article have spoken with this viewpoint. They liked what they saw, or at least unconsciously accepted the cultural assumptions of which they were a part. This tendency has led to what might be described as the traditional view of Mormon-Indian relations. Begun by Hubert Howe Bancroft, Orson F. Whitney, and B. H. Roberts, it has continued in our own time with such scholars as Juanita Brooks. In an early article that had a wider implication than her apparent focus, Brooks examined the pioneer practice of taking Indian children into white homes. While she was not at all sure of the long-lasting success of the program, her conclusions were otherwise warmly supportive of both Brigham Young and his outlying settlers. Brooks's article had another importance. In examining this early



attempt at acculturation, she provided an early though seldom followed example of Mormon-Indian people's history.<sup>5</sup>

Charles E. Dibble's treatment of the Mormon mission to the Shoshoni was an equally important early survey. Dibble presaged later writing by placing the Mormon advance into the "land of the Shoshoni" within the cultural context of both white and red man. On one hand, like Brooks he acknowledged the Mormons' "special view of their own mission and the mission of the Indian." But he also traced Mormon success and failure within the Shoshoni's own cultural patterns.<sup>6</sup> Subsequent writers have also pursued the theme of Mormon missions. David L. Bigler treated the ill-fated Fort Limhi, Idaho, settlement among the Bannocks.<sup>7</sup> L. A. Fleming studied the Muddy River settlements in present-day southeastern Nevada, while Charles S. Peterson documented the Mormons' proselyting efforts with the Hopi.<sup>8</sup> Though none of these pieces has the explicit sympathy of Brooks's article, none bears acrimony. They are content to tell their story within the framework of established interpretation: The Mormon-Indian frontier, while never without tension and even conflict, was nevertheless characterized by the Mormons' good intentions.<sup>9</sup>

The dean of Mormon historians, Leonard J. Arrington, also offered a supportive view. Writing several chapters on Indians while working on larger topics, Arrington, and in one case his coauthor Davis Bitton, updated the long-standing consensus. Arrington provided a broader survey of Brigham Young's policy, from the initial pioneer adjuration to "fort up" to later techniques aimed at assimilating Utah's Native Americans into Anglo society. In describing Mormon policy Arrington used words like "cooperation," "conciliation," "patience," and "forbearance." Yet he also acknowledged the tension between the Mormons' kindly Indian dealing and the requirements inherent in their large-scale colonization on Native American lands:

Brigham's Indian policy did not encompass respect or recognition for the values and outlook of their culture; he cannot fairly be portrayed as enlightened in a sense that would satisfy the militant Native Americans of today. Nonetheless, viewed in the nineteenth-century context, when ruthless exploitation and genocide were all too common, Brigham displayed moderation and a willingness to share.<sup>10</sup>

In sharp contrast to the views of the traditional historians, beginning in the late 1970s a competing version of events has emerged. Like the revisionists outside Utah and no doubt inspired by them, these younger historians approach the topic from what they feel was the Indian or at least a non-Mormon point of view.



Instead of cooperation on the Mormon-Indian frontier, they sense conflict. They see less philanthropy in Mormon dealing than cant. They look mostly in vain for anything praiseworthy or even unusual about the Mormon-Indian experience. Utah and the Intermountain West were largely the same old American refrain: two cultures sharply in conflict with the weaker left without rights, lands, or dignity.

The products of this newer approach are neither numerous nor comprehensive. No one has attempted even the limited overview undertaken by Arrington. One of the more active revisionists is Floyd A. O'Neil, director of the American West Center at the University of Utah. O'Neil began his study with a still unpublished Ph.D. dissertation on the Ute nation, followed some years later by an article on Mormon frontiersman George Washington Bean, which deals less with Bean than with Mormon-Indian relations in general. O'Neil also coauthored with Stanford J. Layton an interpretation of Brigham Young as Indian superintendent.<sup>11</sup>

The latter study is representative of the new approach. O'Neil and Layton see the Mormons' land hunger as voracious, their motives suspect, and their effect on the Indians "devastating." Brigham Young in turn is viewed, especially in his dealings with Washington-appointed territorial officials, as arbitrary and ultimately ineffectual. The authors, however, concede some Mormon peculiarity: "Mormonism's stormy midwestern experience, its New England heritage, its scriptural base, and its schizophrenic view of government in the nineteenth century combined to create its own script that was acted out on the Utah stage."<sup>12</sup> It is, however, clearly an unpleasant drama, without much attractiveness insofar as the Mormon actors go.

Several articles by other scholars have continued the strain. Howard A. Christy argues that "hostility and bloodshed, as much as benevolence and conciliation, characterized Mormon-Indian relations in Utah before 1852." In point of fact, the former categories dominate Christy's survey. Centering his attention on Brigham Young and the Mormons' "Fort Utah" settlement near present-day Provo, Christy concludes that the Mormons held themselves to be culturally superior (indeed like the Indians themselves), took their lands, and at least during the period of survey failed to ameliorate Indian conditions by a policy of benevolence. According to Christy, the result was not unique. Like Native Americans elsewhere, Indians in Utah were not civilized, but destroyed.<sup>13</sup>

Others find equal harshness. Albert Winkler focuses on Mormon violence during the Black Hawk War that culminated in the killing of imprisoned Paiute men, women, and children at



Circleville, Utah, "the largest massacre," Winkler believes, "of Indians in Utah's history."<sup>14</sup> R. Warren Metcalf's view of the Black Hawk War is similar, holding that "the settlers first expropriated . . . [Indian] lands and then, when they resisted or became a nuisance, the government removed them. The Black Hawk War may thus be seen as the hostile phase of this familiar pattern."<sup>15</sup> Perhaps Eugene Campbell's *Establishing Zion* provides the fullest statement of the new school. Devoting two of his nineteen chapters to the subject, Campbell summarizes previous findings. First, he argues for Mormon inconsistency. While the settlers' scriptural injunctions and good intentions might impel them to found Indian missions, their treatment of the Native American was besotted by harsh encounters. Emphasizing tension, conflict, and the similarity of Mormon ways to the broader American experience, Campbell holds that Mormon colonization was disastrous for the Native American.<sup>16</sup>

The challenge of the revisionists met with surprising passivity. Only Lawrence G. Coates, a professor of history at Ricks College, rose to the traditionalists' defense. Frankly acknowledging the Saints' ways were not always those of Brigham Young, Coates maintains that President Young's relations "with the Indians were more than pious expressions of good will or statements of empty dreams, hopes, and visions." If this argument was intended as a riposte to O'Neil and Layton, Coates appears equally willing to take on Christy, insisting that Brigham Young's acts, "more than simple deeds of kindness or acts of violence," were a "blend of his social-religious-humanitarian philosophy and practical measures that he thought necessary for establishing the Mormon kingdom of God on earth."<sup>17</sup>

The debate over Mormon Indian policy embraces some of the issues—and problems—of the larger, national discussion. Certainly some of the revisionists evince a higher appreciation, or tolerance, of Indian culture and viewpoint. Environmental issues are also at times manifest, with at least several of the revisionists treating the Indian as something of a model or at least a successful ecologist. But if new perspectives are provided, there is also a lamentable downside. Too often revisionist passion hinders thorough and balanced analysis. Indeed, some of the younger authors only reverse the roles of previous heroes and villains, creating fresh stereotypes in their wake.

Of course not all historical writing of the topic fits neatly into the two categories. A second article by Howard Christy mixes elements of both. Christy describes the passive defensive tactics successfully employed by Mormon leaders during the Walker War,



arguing that such a strategy was unprecedented in Mormon-Indian dealing and perhaps "unique in the general western [United States] experience." But he is not prepared to abandon the thesis of conflict. Were not the leadership's defensive tactics during the war an admission of its earlier failure with the "mailed fist"? Moreover, Christy chooses to accentuate the rank-and-file's resistance to the tactic. Didn't this document the "average" Mormon's hostility to the red man?<sup>18</sup>

Other writers have stood outside the polar tensions of Native American and Mormon studies. Gustive O. Larson narrates the circumstances of the important 1865 Spanish Fork treaty. In exchange for the promise of long-term annuities, the negotiated but unratified treaty tried to extinguish Ute land titles.<sup>19</sup> Thomas G. Alexander's study of relations with the Interior Department places Mormon and Utah Indian matters into a wider, national scope, while Beverly Beeton's review of the Utah Indian farms, 1850-62, provides useful detail without the usual advocacy.<sup>20</sup> Finally, Beverly P. Smaby broadens the interpretive categories in her study of Mormons and Indians in the Great Basin. Less interested in sorting out blame than in understanding events, Smaby uses an ecological framework uniting geography, social organization, demography, and cultural values to describe the Mormon and Native American tension. Her "resource utilization" model finds two cultures radically at odds, with the Saints guilty not so much of blood and carnage as of excessive optimism and naiveté: "The Mormons, so inventive in solving problems of their own continued existence, were unable to appreciate the Indian ecological system; hence they were not in a position to supply any plan for change which grew from the concerns of Indian culture."<sup>21</sup>

Where do Mormon-Indian studies go from here? How can the varying historiographical perspectives be used to reconstruct a new and perhaps holistic design? A national perspective reminds us of the usual Hegelian process inherent in such controversies. In the national Native American literature, the advocacy of the 1960s and 1970s replaced the established *thesis*, and in turn the new *antithesis* has given way to *synthesis*. Recent works by Robert Berkhofer, Henry Warner Bowden, William Hagan, Clyde A. Milner, and Francis Paul Prucha have blurred polarities by suggesting the commonsense proposition that no race monopolizes good and evil. This new mood, perhaps a reflection of the cultural relativism of our own time, avoids the imposition of personal values, eschews ideological tirade for attempted balance, respects opposing cultures, and speaks softly, dispassionately, and when judging



human motive even ambiguously.<sup>22</sup> Certainly these are not unworthy goals or themes.

The job must commence by expanding and homogenizing sources. Perhaps because of the daunting task before them, few scholars have mastered basic Mormon, Utah, and Bureau of Indian Affairs materials. For instance, the readily available *Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* contains an unusually rich lode of Indian resources, unfortunately concealed by a thoroughly unusable index on the topic.<sup>23</sup> The LDS Church Archives contain over one hundred diaries touching pioneer-Indian activity. Even more crucial, the Native American materials in the Brigham Young correspondence, largely favorable to the traditional view, have been the sole domain of Leonard Arrington and Lawrence Coates; no one else came knocking even when these materials were readily available.<sup>24</sup> Equally underused are the important Utah militia papers housed mainly at the Utah State Archives. Historians have made better use of the extensive but sometimes anti-Mormon Bureau of Indian Affairs letters and memoranda, but hardly in a comprehensive way. The best Native American work has dipped into a variety of these Mormon and non-Mormon sources. More often, selective research has produced selective conclusions.

Moreover, we must do a better job at understanding the Native American. Roy Harvey Pearce's observation is to the point: "White Americans in talking about the Indians have usually been talking to themselves about themselves."<sup>25</sup> Historians are not without knowledge of the Utah tribes.<sup>26</sup> But their reliance on traditional written sources has inhibited penetration and understanding. Even surviving Indian statements are inevitably strained through white perception, and as a result European cultural concepts have often been applied to the Indian in a rough and heavy-handed manner.

Examples of our ignorance are not difficult to find. Basic questions such as Indian population and mortality can be posed but not readily answered. Most surveys place Utah's indigenous population at the arrival of the Mormons somewhere between twelve thousand and thirty-five thousand, a not insignificant margin of error. It is significant, however, that recent national historians and demographers speak with one voice in positing much higher population estimates for the North American aborigines—in some cases estimates have risen by a factor of more than nine.<sup>27</sup> The implications of the higher calculations, even if only partially applicable to the Great Basin, are suggestive. White man's diseases—typhoid, diphtheria, colds, gonorrhea, influenza,



chicken pox, whooping cough, tuberculosis, yellow fever, scarlet fever, strep infections, and especially measles, smallpox, and syphilis—wreaked terrible havoc.<sup>28</sup> One mountain man thought the decline in Indian population began two decades prior to the coming of large-scale white migration and settlement. Thereafter it continued apace or accelerated.<sup>29</sup>

Indian disease and decline suggest important questions. Was the struggle for game and land as great as some have thought? A diminished Indian population may have sustained itself at former and even higher levels despite a narrowing resource base, at least in the short run. At least some Indians, such as Kanosh, reported an improved living standard a decade after the Mormons began to move onto their lands.<sup>30</sup> Does the virulence of European disease account for what seems the rapid decline in Indian folk healing—and perhaps other traditional beliefs as well?<sup>31</sup> The shaman-healer must have been seen as utterly impotent before the new scourges. Finally, we need to assess the role of disease as a factor in Indian behavior, both in inciting and moderating it. Disoriented and confused Indians at times blamed Mormon devilry for sickness within their tribes.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, members of Black Hawk's band testified to the role of infirmity and death in bringing their warfare to an end.<sup>33</sup>

More needs to be known of other matters besides disease patterns. Historians too often have spoken cavalierly about Indian political organization, suggesting a unity or homogeneity that never existed. Some have generalized unwisely, citing the statements or behavior of one Indian or group and applying it indiscriminately to others. Utah Indian structure was diffuse, fluid, and local. Scores of petty bands, often with only nominal or temporary chiefs, pursued their own interests, sometimes mercurially and contradictorily and often contrary to the behavior of their neighboring tribesmen. Of course within the larger tribes there were what white men saw as "grand chiefs." But even imposing leaders such as Washakee, Sowiette, Tabby, Wakara, and Arapeen complained of their inability to impose consistent discipline. Symptomatic of the problem, Wakara, by virtue of his supposed suzerainty, gained a long-lasting eponym during "Walker War," though he at times refused responsibility for the conflict and was out of the territory during its final stages.<sup>34</sup>

The subtribes and tribes reacted differently to the gamut of the white man's ways. Some responded favorably, at least initially, to the idea of Indian farms, having practiced a rudimentary agriculture prior to the Mormon settlement. Others saw farming as "squaw's work," beneath contempt. Arapeen, Kanosh, and Tutsigobot took



to Mormon preachments and became in their own way preachers themselves. Relatively isolated from the Saints in the Uinta Basin, Sowiette and Tabby were more resistant to the Mormon message. The latter chiefs, however, were not opposed to the new reservation at Uinta (for them there was no uprooting), but many others resisted leaving their forefathers' lands and graves. These diffuse and centrifugal tendencies were especially apparent in the Utes' wars with the white men. From the initial "Battle Creek" engagement near present-day Pleasant Grove, Utah, in 1849 to the culminating Black Hawk War a decade and a half later, there was no unified Indian response, with warriors invariably fewer in number than the peacemakers, fence sitters, and informers. The Mormons never lacked for allies.

The cleavages widened at the intertribal level. Shoshonis, Utes, and Paiutes bore a strong animosity for one another. One week after their arrival, the advance party of the Mormons watched a wild fight between a Shoshoni and a Ute, which eventually ended in the latter's death. "The Shoshonis appeared to be displeased because the brethren had traded with the Utes," a pioneer record summarized the substance of the difficulty.<sup>35</sup> The Mormons would find tribal rivalry endemic. Like Indians elsewhere, the Shoshonis and Utes each regarded themselves as "the people" and probably feared their immemorial red enemies more than the white intruder.

Behind the inter- and intratribal rivalries, of course, lay people—individual men and women with personality and feeling, not simply a faceless, blurred historical concept or conglomeration. Certainly we know enough of the early chiefs to begin assigning character. There was the sterling and magisterial Sowiette, bearing the wisdom of old age, consistently seeking peace; Wakara, quick-witted and clever, volatile, light on his feet; Kanosh, the "white man's friend"; Big Elk, brave, cool, determined as he defended his well-chosen ramparts during the Fort Utah conflict; or Squash, angry, manipulating, given to trickery. Together, even using white man's records, their collective portrait is not unsatisfactory. Certainly they were not passive. Taken as a group, the Indian leaders seem able, thoughtful, and, within the measure of their society, honorable. Generally their first impulse—and often their second and third as well—was toward peace. Concerned about their leadership responsibility, most wanted what was best for their followers and seemingly recognized quite early that their nomadic ways must eventually be put aside. The trick, given the deep longings of their culture, was in the doing.



What does this suggest about the writing of Indian history? We must seek new interpretive concepts. We must write carefully with an eye to the particular, but above all must be conscious and respectful of another culture. "If we are going to tell the whole story of Indian-white relations," Wilbur Jacobs has written, "we must make an all-out attempt to picture the clash of cultures so that there will be an understanding of both cultures, not just one. Thus, to give more attention to the Indian side is not necessarily to plead for the Indian point of view."<sup>36</sup>

Fortunately there are helpful existing disciplines. Too long have the historian, the ethnologist, and the psychological anthropologist pursued their own ways. Ethnography can help make sense of the abundant clues of Indian culture in the written sources. For instance, the records often speak of the "brother" relationship of the major Ute leaders.<sup>37</sup> Are not at least some of these references to the cross-cousin marriages widely found in American aborigine culture elsewhere? Similarly, the ethnologist can bring understanding of tribal organization and functioning, ecological and social relationships, and the Native American's changing economic system.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, the rich Indian belief and religious system begs for research, with its guardian spirits, spells, dreams, shamans, and burial rites. While Joseph G. Jorgensen has explored Ute deprivation, religion, and shifting culture, much remains to be done.<sup>39</sup> For many Great Basin Indians, the 1870s were filled with religious awakening, millennial expectation, reasserted cultural pride, Mormon conversion, and deep visionary quest—all at the time the inaugurated reservation movement seemed to place Indian culture at great risk. From the retrospect of the twentieth century, these developments may have an application beyond Mormon and Indian studies. The religious awakening of the 1870s parallels in many ways the widely documented Third World "cargo-cult religions" of our own time and may provide a case study of a people's religious adaptation to the shock of deep-felt culture change.

If we need to understand the Native American better, the same is true for the Mormon. Despite reams of previous study, in some ways Brigham Young and his followers remain as shrouded in mystery as their Native American counterparts. The problem involves both facts and interpretation. As indicated previously, the field has only been partially cultivated. But as important as further research may be, the challenging and perhaps irreducible problem lies with methods and explication.

The strong sense of advocacy afflicting both Mormon and Indian studies will likely continue. But there are interpretive



approaches that may narrow the differences and bring more understanding. First, Mormon Indian policy must be placed within its wider culture. To an outsider looking in, some of the current arguments must appear strangely skewed. Brigham Young's 1850 letter urging Indian removal and the extinction of Indian land titles, often cited as an indictment, becomes more understandable within the context of national practice.<sup>40</sup> Usually titles were cleared prior to or as soon after settlement as possible, but the Mormon advance into Mexican territory, the ambiguity of Indian land rights conveyed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and the slowness of the federal government to clarify them left both Mormon and non-Mormon territorial leaders deeply troubled.<sup>41</sup>

Other examples of equally narrow interpretation can be cited. For their part, Mormons have not been quick to show that many of their pioneer practices, whether the charity of the Relief Society women in making Indian clothing or Mormon attempts to promote Indian agriculture, education, and conversion, fit into the altruistic practices of the time.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the Mormons shared long-term goals with their broader society. Like eastern reformers, they wanted Indian assimilation, which scholars now sense was probably beyond anyone's grasp. In a passage that might have been written by a historian detailing the Mormon-Indian experience, Clyde Milner has observed: "The assimilationist program often assumed a simplistic correlation between the acceptance of white ways and the establishment of economic prosperity. With the habits of civilization were to come the habits of husbandry and vice versa. Cultural assimilation and agricultural development were to go hand in hand."<sup>43</sup> The flaw of course lay in the strength and resiliency of Indian culture, which white Americans, in their ethnocentrism, were not quick to perceive.<sup>44</sup>

Mormon experience was like experience elsewhere in another respect. Those most prone to humanity and generosity toward the Indians were often removed from daily, intimate contact with them, whether Gilded Age liberals, enlightened military commanders, or reform-minded churchmen.<sup>45</sup> In the case of the Saints, the incidence of misbehavior and culpability seemed to grow with each concentric circle radiating from Brigham Young and the Mormon leadership. The gap between the ideal and the real left the Mormon prophet despairing: "If the inhabitants of this Territory, my brethren, had never condescended to reduce themselves to the practices of the Indian—(as a few of them have) to their low, degraded condition, and in some cases even lower, there never would have been any trouble between us and our red neighbors."<sup>46</sup> Or consider Young's letter to Arapeen during the Tintic War:



I feel just as well with you as I ever did. I sometimes think that if we could get a valley a way off alone and could get all the Mormons that want to fight Indians and wont hear, and all the Indians that want to fight and wont listen to good talk such as you give them and let them fight till they were satisfied that it would be the means of making a good peace.<sup>47</sup>

One need not probe too deeply to sense the tension between Brigham and some of his followers. While many attempted to adhere to his policy of conciliation, no doubt others bridled at his counsel. A few responded publicly. One correspondent spoke of the heavy demands the Indians made on the settlers and called for a "firm" policy of discipline. In a thinly veiled allusion to the Mormon leader, he wrote, "Should hostilities ensue, whilst we wish our leaders to be prudent, wise men, we would rather cho[o]se those who have learned other military tactics than the extreme of officers to the rear in time of danger and well away to the front on the retreat."<sup>48</sup>

Was there something unique or unusual in the Mormons' Indian experience after all? One suspects from the impressionistic evidence before us that there is a story waiting to be told. We do know from the work of Arrington, Coates, and Christy that especially after 1850 Brigham Young preached a conciliatory policy, which at least in the Walker War resulted in a defensive, almost pacifistic stance.<sup>49</sup> He was as cautious during the Black Hawk difficulty, reminding Orson Hyde, who directed Mormon affairs at the seat of the conflict in Sanpete County:

Our past experience with the Indian tribes with which we have come in contact has led us to adopt as a maxim that it is cheaper to feed Indians than to fight them. The correctness of this maxim is especially forced upon us when we consider the great risk the brethren run of losing their lives in endeavoring to whip or kill the marauders. The loss of the life of even one faithful man is something too valuable to be put in the scale against any number of these Indians. . . .

The plan we now propose to adopt is to stop fighting altogether, and as soon as possible establish communication with the disaffected Indians and endeavor to make peace with them by means of presents.<sup>50</sup>

President Young's new policy did not bring a quick end to the conflict. With depredations continuing, he moved a half year later to quiet growing white animosity. Calling a meeting of the Saints at Springville, he touched first on the comments of a previous speaker: "Brother [Ezra T.] Benson expressed himself as though some of the brethren felt like wiping out the Lamanites [Indians] in these regions, root and branch. The evil passions that arise in our



hearts would prompt us to do this, but we must bring them into subjection to the law of Christ." He then asked the Saints to forgive past depredations and allow malefactors to resume a place in their communities:

When they come to live in your vicinity again, let them come in peace. . . . Do we wish to do right? . . . Then let the Lamanites come back to their homes, where they were born and brought up. This is the land that they and their fathers have walked over and called their own; and they have just as good a right to call it theirs to-day as any people have to call any land their own. . . .

. . . We should now use the Indians kindly, and deal with them so gently that we will win their hearts and affections to us more strongly than before; and the much good that has been done them, and the many kindnesses that have been shown them, will come up before them, and they will see that we are their friends.<sup>51</sup>

Other evidence can be suggested beside Brigham Young's sermonizing. In the aftermath of the Spanish Fork treaty, O. H. Irish acknowledged Brigham's sway. "He has pursued so kind and conciliatory a policy with the Indians," he reported to his Washington superiors, "that it has given him great influence over them."<sup>52</sup> Even an antagonistic observer, Agent Garland Hurt, acknowledged the scale of Mormon Indian subsidies. He complained, in fact, that they had become too great a burden on the Mormon rank and file.<sup>53</sup> Following the Indian incursions into Sanpete County in 1872, Camp Douglas commander Lieutenant Colonel Henry Morrow was impressed with the Saints' self-control. The Indians had become "arrogant, domineering, and dictatorial," entering homes, demanding specially prepared food, requisitioning livestock. "I think I may say with truthfulness," Morrow reported, "that there is not another American community in the nation which would have endured half the outrages these people endured, before rising up as one man to drive out the savage invaders at the point of the bayonet."<sup>54</sup> While the question is yet to be fully treated, we may tentatively posit that the scope and duration of the Mormons' conciliatory policy may have been unusual, perhaps exceptional.

This hypothesis does not set aside the primary assumption of the revisionist school. Tension and strife were endemic in Mormon-Indian affairs, with Indian land rights usually at the center of things. The Mormons pursued an uneven land policy, sometimes taking refuge in the scriptural injunction that the land belonged to no man—neither Indian, Mormon, Mexican, nor American. It was the Lord's and for everyone to share.<sup>55</sup> On other occasions, they struck deals, securing occupancy in lieu of services or goods. Sometimes they simply settled, taking much of the ground but



reserving parcels for Indian use. In several instances, driven to desperation by Indian depredations, they offered to buy large tracts from Wakara and others. More generally they asserted the clearing of Indian titles was a federal government responsibility. Through the several permutations of their policy, they generally upheld an Indian moral right. Young claimed his followers had never settled on Indian ground without permission, and until titles could be established the Mormons bore an obligation to provide the original occupants compensating food and assistance.<sup>56</sup>

If Mormon motives and policies were mixed, so were those of the Native Americans. As elsewhere in the nation, Utah's Indians perceived cultural and economic advantages to white settlement. Trading their skins and labor, they secured from the Mormons horses, guns, ammunition, and learning into white man's ways. While often beneficial to both parties, the arrangement sometimes brought tension. Brigham Young admitted that while the Native Americans had "universally solicited" Mormon settlement, their hospitality could sour: "If they in some few instances should happen to be refused a piece of bread, or a beef ox when it could not be spared, they might anger up a moment, or wish to force presents, complain that this was their land and wish us to leave."<sup>57</sup>

For President Young's part, he believed the ensuing tension was less than in other frontier settlements.<sup>58</sup> That proposition is yet to be demonstrated. But it seems reasonable to conclude that the Mormon-Indian frontier had elements of both *conflict* and *cooperation*, and that when interpreting the Mormon-Indian experience, historians would do well to set aside polarities for models of human complexity and diversity. The breadth of data cannot be encompassed otherwise.

An illustration will conclude the point. During the pioneer era, soldiers, forty-niners, Gentile settlers, and territorial officials each charged the Mormons with Indian "tampering," that is, controlling the Indians for their own purposes independent of national policy.<sup>59</sup> That charge, which had truth to it, is hardly consistent with the revisionists' stress on unalloyed conflict. Would embattled and hostile Indians have been pliable to Mormon influence? Why did Bureau of Indian Affairs agents fear a Mormon and Indian alliance and consistently report many of the Indians' pro-Mormon sympathies?

This leads to a final element in the proposed new synthesis. The new Indian history needs to place the Native American into the texture of pioneer life, and it is here that the revisionists' emphasis on conflict has particularly been ill serving. Too often the Utah Indian has appeared in our histories simply as a barrier to white



man's civilization. We have emphasized wars and warriors instead of painting the broader landscape of everyday life. Sometimes the record seems expunged, as though a censor's scissors had been at work. Historians for example have typically described the Salt Lake Valley upon the pioneers' arrival as an uninhabited no-man's land, a Ute-Shoshoni march. Yet Brigham Young remembered three hundred Indians periodically camped at their Warm Springs traditional camp, with additional clans to the south and east.<sup>60</sup> Accounts of the inaugural Pioneer Day celebration of 1849 say little about the Native American, though one of its purposes was Indian pacification, and Wakara and two hundred of his tribesmen ate the Saints' bounty.<sup>61</sup> Despite the paucity of detail in contemporary accounts, after the initial stage of settlement Indians became part of the warp and woof of most Mormon communities, coming and going, interacting with the settlers. This was also true during the first decade after the establishment of the Uinta reservation, when contrary to some narratives the bulk of the Indians remained with the whites on their ancestral lands.

Much of this daily, common detail can be reconstructed from diaries. The neglected Works Progress Administration historical records, for example, provide fascinating glimpses. "The Ute Indians were always around," remembered one respondent on early Round Valley life.<sup>62</sup> Hannah McFarlane Bingham recalled the arrival of a thirty-six member Indian camp on a sand ridge east of Ogden. Only eight years old, she played with the Indian children until her brother accidentally stepped on an Indian child's foot. The child's frightened cries brought "two old buck Indians" wielding a butcher knife. "Her brother ran home, ducked under the bed, very much frightened. Her father had to give them flour and sugar to pacify them. Mrs. Bingham never played with the Indian children again."<sup>63</sup>

This kind of detail suggests the intimacy between the two peoples—but also the cultural gap that divided them. Their religious dealings demonstrated as much. Particularly in the early 1850s, the Mormons actively evangelized the Indians, baptizing many and ordaining prominent chiefs to the Mormon priesthood. But probably not until the 1870s did the Indians demonstrate much Mormon identity. Then, hundreds voluntarily submitted to baptism or rebaptism. To the Mormons it seemed the scriptural fulfillment that "a nation will be born in a day."<sup>64</sup>

During this period the Mormons accelerated their program of "civilizing," establishing Indian farms in the Malad and Thistle valleys and another in the west desert. But a decade later Church President John Taylor acknowledged the failure of the Mormons to

deal effectively with their red brethren: "It has been too much the habit in many places to have the Indians to take care of themselves in religious matters," he observed. "They have been baptized and confirmed and then left to do as they please."<sup>65</sup>

By the end of Brigham Young's presidency, from the Mormon perspective there were successes as well as failures. President Young's policy had neutralized the primary chiefs and primary clans; most Utah Indian hostility during his thirty-year administration had been localized and spasmodic. The wholesale carnage of many other communities had been avoided. Probably the majority of Utah's Native Americans were at least nominal Mormons. Yet, unfortunately, there was also distress. Government Indian Agents reported the decline of the never-too-strong chiefly power. Disease had wreaked havoc, while the social diseases of alcoholism, gambling, and prostitution were widespread.<sup>66</sup>

During the winter of 1870, the *Deseret News* provided a telling vignette, noting that no fewer than five Indians had been seen walking State Road intoxicated: "Three of the five were inclined to mischief; one drew a pistol and the other two drew their butcher knives, and a fight among the three seemed imminent. The pistol was fired, but instead of fighting they sat down and commenced gambling for whisky."<sup>67</sup>

The incident told of the times—and of what increasingly would occur. In reconstructing Utah's pioneer-Indian relations, we may speak of the need for greater understanding for both the Indian and the Mormon. We may hope that future studies will smooth the sharp contours of past writing and bring newer interpretive categories that will endow the protagonists with greater complexity and humanity. But the story will remain more unpleasant than we might wish. Despite the good intentions of many red men and whites, two opposing and unyoked cultures had clashed, and with disease playing a major role the result became predictable and tragic.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Mary Goble Pay, "Reminiscences," in *Treasures of Pioneer History*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1952-57), 4:208; *Deseret News*, 21 August 1867; 7, 9 July and 22 December 1869; and Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 25 May 1869, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives); see also n. 23 below.

<sup>2</sup>David J. Whittaker, "Mormons and Native Americans: A Historical and Bibliographical Introduction," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Winter 1985): 33-64, offers a fine bibliographic introduction to the topic. While one of the purposes of this article is to discuss recent historical writing on Utah's Native Americans, readers should also be aware of Peter Gottfredson, *Indian Depredations in Utah* (Salt Lake City: Skelton Publishing Co., 1919). Gottfredson's work is anecdotal, fragmentary, and carries the cultural biases of his time, yet it remains the beginning point for nineteenth-century Mormon-Indian research, particularly for military matters.

<sup>3</sup>I am thinking especially of such authors as Cecil Eby, "That Disgraceful Affair," *The Black Hawk War* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973); Charles Hamilton, ed., *Cry of the Thunderbird: The American Indian's Own Story* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972); Robert F. Heizer, ed., *The Destruction of California Indians* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Peregrine Smith, 1974); Wilbur R. Jacobs, "The Indian and the Frontier in American History—A Need for Revision," *Western Historical Quarterly* 4 (January 1973): 43-56; Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975); Wilcomb E. Washburn, *The Indian in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975); and Donald E. Worcester, ed., *Forked Tongues and Broken Treaties* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1975).

<sup>4</sup>My generalization, of course, is sweeping, but the general mood is detached. The best of the recent books include Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1978); Henry Warner Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); William T. Hagan, *United States-Comanche Relations: The Reservation Years* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976); William G. McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries, 1789-1839* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1984); Clyde A. Milner II, *With Good Intentions: Quaker Work among the Pawnees, Otos and Omahas in the 1870s* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976); Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Bernard W. Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973); and Robert A. Trennert, Jr., *Alternative to Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1846-1851* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975).

<sup>5</sup>Juanita Brooks, "Indian Relations on the Mormon Frontier," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 12 (January-April 1944): 1-48. See also Juanita Brooks, "Indian Sketches from the Journal of T. D. Brown and Jacob Hamblin," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 29 (October 1961): 347-60.

<sup>6</sup>Charles E. Dibble, "The Mormon Mission to the Shoshoni Indians," *Utah Humanities Review* 1 (January 1947): 64.

<sup>7</sup>David L. Bigler, "The Crisis at Fort Limhi, 1858," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35 (Spring 1967): 121-36.

<sup>8</sup>L. A. Fleming, "The Settlements on the Muddy, 1865 to 1871: 'A Godforsaken Place,'" *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35 (Spring 1967): 147-72; Charles S. Peterson, "The Hopis and the Mormons, 1858-1873," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 39 (Spring 1971): 179-94. See also Charles S. Peterson, "Jacob Hamblin, Apostle to the Lamanites, and the Indian Mission," *Journal of Mormon History* 2 (1975): 21-34.

<sup>9</sup>In this category might also be placed the preliminary and more conversational Coulsen and Geneva Wright, "Indian-White Relations in the Uintah Basin," *Utah Humanities Review* 2 (October 1948): 319-45.

<sup>10</sup>Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Knopf, 1985), 222. See also Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979), 145-60; and Leonard J. Arrington, "The Mormons and the Indians: A Review and Evaluation," *Record* (Friends of the Library, Washington State University, Pullman) 31 (1970): 5-29.

<sup>11</sup>Floyd A. O'Neil, "Ute Nation" (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1973); "The Mormons, the Indians, and George Washington Bean," in Clyde A. Milner II and Floyd A. O'Neil, eds., *Churchmen and the Western Indians, 1820-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 77-107; Floyd A. O'Neil and Stanford J. Layton, "Of Pride and Politics: Brigham Young as Indian Superintendent," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 46 (Summer 1978): 236-50.

<sup>12</sup>O'Neil and Layton, "Of Pride and Politics," 237.

<sup>13</sup>Howard A. Christy, "Open Hand and Mailed Fist: Mormon-Indian Relations in Utah, 1847-52," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 46 (Summer 1978): 217.



<sup>14</sup>Albert Winkler, "The Circleville Massacre: A Brutal Incident in Utah's Black Hawk War," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 55 (Winter 1987): 4.

<sup>15</sup>R. Warren Metcalf, "A Precarious Balance: The Northern Utes and the Black Hawk War," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 57 (Winter 1989): 25. For Metcalf's larger study, see "A Reappraisal of Utah's Black Hawk War" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1989). Carlton Culmsee, *Utah's Black Hawk War: Lore and Reminiscences of Participants* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1973), was first published as a 1930 newspaper serialization. While conveying incident and detail, it of course does not partake in the currents and crosscurrents of present-day writing.

<sup>16</sup>Eugene E. Campbell, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-1869* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1988), 94, 100. While the focus is not on Mormon-Indian relations, Brigham D. Madsen, *The Shoshoni Frontier and the Bear River Massacre* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985), and Madsen, *Chief Pocatello: The 'White Plume'* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1986), in passing describe Mormon conduct as confrontational.

<sup>17</sup>Lawrence G. Coates, "Brigham Young and Mormon Indian Policies: The Formative Period, 1836-1851," *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (Spring 1978): 428. See also Lawrence G. Coates, "Mormons and Social Change among the Shoshoni, 1853-1900," *Idaho Yesterdays* 15 (Winter 1972): 2-11; Lawrence G. Coates, "George Catlin, Brigham Young, and the Plains Indians," *BYU Studies* 17 (Autumn 1976): 114-18; and Lawrence G. Coates, "Refugees Meet: The Mormons and Indians in Iowa," *BYU Studies* 21 (Fall 1981): 491-514.

<sup>18</sup>Howard A. Christy, "The Walker War: Defense and Conciliation as Strategy," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 47 (Fall 1979): 419.

<sup>19</sup>Gustive O. Larson, "Uintah Dream: The Ute Treaty—Spanish Fork, 1865," *BYU Studies* 14 (Spring 1974): 361-81.

<sup>20</sup>Thomas G. Alexander, *A Clash of Interests: Interior Department and Mountain West, 1863-96* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), esp. chap. 4. Beverly Beeton, "Teach Them to Till the Soil: An Experiment with Indian Farms, 1850-1862," *American Indian* 3 (Winter 1977-78): 299-320.

<sup>21</sup>Beverly P. Smaby, "The Mormons and the Indians: Conflicting Ecological Systems in the Great Basin," *American Studies* 16 (Spring 1975): 46.

<sup>22</sup>See n. 4 for full information on the following: Berkhofer, *White Man's Indian*; Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions*; Hagan, *United States Comanche Relations*; Milner, *With Good Intentions*; Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis and Great Father*.

<sup>23</sup>The Journal History is a huge, multivolume, chronological scrapbook of Mormon miscellany, drawing on diaries, newspapers, personal and official letters, and other LDS church records. Microfilm copies of the collection are lodged in principal Mormon and Utah repositories, including the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University.

<sup>24</sup>Once open to research, the Brigham Young Collection lately has been inaccessible to scholars without the special permission of the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

<sup>25</sup>Cited in Brian W. Dippie, review of Stan Steiner, *The Vanishing White Man*, in *Western Historical Quarterly* 8 (October 1977): 470.

<sup>26</sup>For a sampling of recent writing on the Mormon region's tribes during the pioneer period, see the special issue of the *Utah Historical Quarterly* 39 (Spring 1971), which includes articles by James B. Allen and Ted J. Warner, "The Gosiute Indians in Pioneer Utah," 162-77; Robert W. Delaney, "The Southern Utes a Century Ago," 114-27; Catherine S. and Don D. Fowler, "Western Shoshonis," 95-113; and Floyd A. O'Neil, "The Reluctant Suzerainty: The Uintah and Ouray Reservation," 129-44. See also Fred A. Conetah, *History of the Northern Ute People*, eds. Kathryn L. McKay and Floyd A. O'Neil (Salt Lake City: Uintah-Ouray Ute Tribe, 1982); Joseph G. Jorgensen, *The Sun Dance Religion: Power for the Powerless* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972); Julian H. Steward, *Aboriginal and Historic Groups of the Ute Indians of Utah: An Analysis with Supplement* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974); Omer C. Stewart, "Ute Indians: Before and after White Contact," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 34 (Winter 1966): 38-61; Omer C. Stewart, "Tribal Distributions in the Great Basin," in Warren L. d'Azevedo et al., eds., *The Current Status of Anthropological Research in the Great Basin: 1964* (Reno, Nev.: Deseret Research Institute, 1966), 167-237; Gregory C. Thompson, "The Unwanted Indians: The Southern Utes in Southeastern Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 49 (Spring 1981): 189-203; S. Lyman Tyler, "The Indians in Utah Territory," in *Utah's History*, ed. Richard D. Poll et al. (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 357-68.

<sup>27</sup>Wilbur R. Jacobs, "The Indian and the Frontier in American History—A Need for Revision," *Western Historical Quarterly* 4 (January 1973): 45. Quite another question is the effect of Western disease on native fauna. Several Indians spoke of the decline of the range after the coming of the mountain men, a generation or two prior to Mormon immigration.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 46 n. 27. Scholars debate whether some venereal diseases, including syphilis, may have been present in the Americas prior to the coming of the Europeans.

<sup>29</sup>Jacob Forney, "Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs," 29 September 1859, in *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C.: George W. Bowman, 1860), 362-63.

<sup>30</sup>*Deseret News*, 24 August 1854, 27 May 1855, and 1 June 1856.



<sup>31</sup>See J. J. Critchlow to E. P. Smith, 10 August 1873, *Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824–81, Utah Superintendency, 1849–1880* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, 1958 [hereafter cited as Indian Affairs Letters, 1824–81]).

<sup>32</sup>Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1858, LDS Church Archives, 712.

<sup>33</sup>John Wesley Powell and G. W. Ingalls, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1873), 47, 56.

<sup>34</sup>Brigham Young came to believe him. "Allow me to say a word in behalf of Walker," he was reported saying in one of his sermons. "I tell this congregation and the world, that 'Indian Walker,' as he is called, has not been at the foundation of the difficulties we have had. He has had nothing to do with them" (*Deseret News*, 11 May 1854).

<sup>35</sup>Journal History, 31 July 1847, 1. Also see the Howard Egan and Wilford Woodruff journals, LDS Church Archives, for the same date.

<sup>36</sup>Jacobs, "The Indian and the Frontier," 43 n. 27.

<sup>37</sup>Using these references, Conway B. Sonne has posited a Ute family dynasty of fifteen members. See "Royal Blood of the Utes," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 22 (July 1954): 271–76.

<sup>38</sup>For a stimulating review of possibilities, see Calvin Martin, "Ethnohistory: A Better Way to Write Indian History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 9 (January 1978): 41–56.

<sup>39</sup>See Jorgensen, *Sun Dance Religion*.

<sup>40</sup>First Presidency to John M. Bernhisel, 20 November 1850, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives. See also Brigham Young Manuscript History, same date, 108.

<sup>41</sup>"Petition of Governor [Alfred Cumming] and Judges . . . to A. B. Greenwood," Journal History, 1 November 1860; and John Dawson, Governor's Message, Journal History, 10 December 1861, 11. The language of the former (p. 1) is instructive: "It is believed that this Territory presents the only instance of the organization of a Territorial Government by Congress,—the country thrown open to settlement without measures being first adopted to extinguish the Indian title. The result has been repeated and almost constant depredations by the Indians upon the settlers, the destruction of whole fields of grain, stealing and driving away stock, and, in many instances, the most wanton and cruel murder of peaceful and unoffending citizens." As late as immediately prior to the negotiation of the 1865 Spanish Fork Treaty, the government was unwilling to recognize fully the Indian title. Agent O. H. Irish was instructed to differentiate between "Indian title" and "Indian occupancy" (see William P. Dole to O. H. Irish, 28 March 1865, in *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the Year 1865* [Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1865], 148–49).

<sup>42</sup>See, for instance, Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions*; William G. McLoughlin, *Cherokees and Missionaries, 1789–1839* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1984); Milner, *With Good Intentions*; Francis Paul Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the 'Friends of the Indian,' 1880–1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973); John Upton Terrell, *The Arrow and the Cross: A History of the American Indian and the Missionaries* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Capra Press, 1979); Gerald Thompson, *The Army and the Navajo: The Bosque Redondo Reservation Experiment, 1863–1868* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1976). For a treatment of Mormon charity, see Richard L. Jensen, "Forgotten Relief Societies, 1844–67," *Dialogue* 16 (Spring 1983): 105–25.

<sup>43</sup>Clyde A. Milner II, "Off the White Road: Seven Nebraska Indian Societies in the 1870s—A Statistical Analysis of Assimilation, Population, and Prosperity," *Western Historical Quarterly* 12 (January 1981): 37.

<sup>44</sup>Francis Paul Prucha, *Great Father*, treats this theme at length.

<sup>45</sup>See Robert H. Keller, *American Protestantism and United States Indian Policy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); Robert Winston Mardock, *The Reformers and the American Indian* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971). For literature on the "reformist" generals, see John W. Bailey, *Pacifying the Plains: General Alfred Terry and the Decline of the Sioux, 1866–1890* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979); Richard N. Ellis, *General Pope and U.S. Indian Policy* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970); and Richard N. Ellis, "The Humanitarian Generals," *Western Historical Quarterly* 3 (April 1972): 169–78.

<sup>46</sup>Brigham Young, Remarks, 6 April 1854, in *Deseret News*, 11 May 1854.

<sup>47</sup>1 March 1856, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>48</sup>Thomas Memmott to the Salt Lake *Herald*, 10 July 1872.

<sup>49</sup>Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses*, 210–22; Coates, "Brigham Young and Mormon Indian Policies"; and Christy, "Walker War."

<sup>50</sup>Brigham Young to Orson Hyde, 1 October 1865, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>51</sup>Brigham Young, "Remarks" (at Springville, 28 July 1866), *Deseret News*, 16 August 1866. Given at the height of the war, this is one of Young's most conciliatory, pacifist statements.

<sup>52</sup>O. H. Irish to William P. Dole, 29 June 1865, *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1865), 150.

<sup>53</sup>Garland Hurt to J. M. Elliot, 4 October 1856, Indian Affairs Letters, 1824–81. Mormons were not hesitant in noting their heavy Indian tax. While such sentiment could be cited at length,

see "Excursion to Fillmore" (a report of the tour of John M. Bernhisel and Daniel H. Wells), 29 August 1855, *Deseret News*; and Edward Hunter, Bishops' Meeting, 29 November 1877, *Journal History*, same date.

<sup>54</sup>Henry A. Morrow, Lt. Col. U. S. Army, Commanding, to George W. Dodge, 7 September 1872, in *Deseret News*, 25 September 1872.

<sup>55</sup>Ps. 24:1, 1 Cor. 10:26. For an example of such Mormon use, see Brigham Young to Washikey, 1 May 1855, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>56</sup>Brigham Young to John M. Bernhisel, 27 May 1856, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives. "We have never in a single instance driven off the Indians from their land," Young claimed, "of this you are well aware."

<sup>57</sup>Brigham Young to John M. Bernhisel, 27 May 1856, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>58</sup>Brigham Young, sermon at Logan, Utah, 9 September 1866, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>59</sup>For the briefest sampling of evidence, see Anthony Ethier to *Deseret News*, 2 July 1863, and the following in Indian Affairs Letters, 1824–81: E. J. Steptoe to George W. Manypenny, 5 April 1855; Garland Hurt to Manypenny, 2 May 1855; Henry Martin to William P. Dole, 2 September 1861; John W. Dawson to C. B. Smith, 26 October 1861; O. H. Irish to William P. Dole, 8 September 1864.

<sup>60</sup>Brigham Young, remarks, *Deseret News*, 15 April 1871.

<sup>61</sup>Thomas L. Kane, "The Mormons: A Discourse Delivered before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania," in *Journal History*, 26 March 1850.

<sup>62</sup>"Interview of Moses L. Burdick," Works Progress Administration Utah Historical Records Survey, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter cited as WPA Records).

<sup>63</sup>"Interview with Hannah McFarlane Bingham," WPA Records.

<sup>64</sup>Edward Hunter, Record of Bishops Meetings, Reports of Wards, Ordinations, Instructions, and General Proceedings of the Bishops and Lesser Priesthood, 2 February 1875 to 27 November 1879, LDS Church Archives. For a contemporary report of some of the conversions, see *Deseret News*, 30 October 1874.

<sup>65</sup>John Taylor and George Q. Cannon to Jesse W. Crosby, Jr., 11 December 1885, John Taylor Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>66</sup>See, for instance, in Indian Affairs Letters, 1824–81: Benjamin Davies to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 20 January 1861; G. W. Dodge to Francis Walker, 18 March 1872; J. J. Critchlow to H. R. Cleem, 15 March 1873; J. W. Powell and G. W. Ingalls to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 25 July 1873.

<sup>67</sup>*Deseret News*, 26 February 1870.



# The Rise and Decline of Mormon San Bernardino

Edward Leo Lyman

From the beginning of what was to be the Latter-day Saint settlement at San Bernardino, the spirit of cooperation and harmony was strikingly prevalent, outstanding even among Mormon pioneers noted for success in planting new colonies through the mutual efforts of their members. Yet while the first three years of the community were notable examples of success and cooperation, the last three years the Mormons dominated there present a contrary picture of growing disenchantment and rising antagonisms. The purpose of this essay is to suggest an explanation of why the successful Mormon community of San Bernardino so rapidly disintegrated.

In 1849, Apostles Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich were sent to California with a specific charge to determine "the expediency or not of holding an influence in the country."<sup>1</sup> Since Brigham Young and his associates had vivid recollections of Mormon inability to live harmoniously among non-Mormon neighbors, this was probably aimed at retaining or regaining influence with Church members in California. After associating with Mormon brethren in the mining camps and elsewhere for much of a year, Elder Lyman wrote to Brigham Young that "to strike hands with a man having the Spirit of God is a rare treat in California," meaning that there were but few, in his judgment, who had maintained their full commitment to the faith after coming into contact with what he termed "the poison of gold."

Nevertheless, Elder Lyman advised that after careful consideration it was his conclusion "that the interests of the church required a resting place in the region." He specified Southern California, which his associate, Elder Rich, had recently described in detail as the only place available with the advantages they were seeking. One of these advantages may well have been distance from

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the corrupting influence of the gold fields. The Apostle reported that California Mormons generally, including those “cut off” (excommunicated) or otherwise disaffected, were anxious for a settlement comprised of Church members. He declared that he had not “urged such to hasten to the lower country,” and frankly hoped that “the foundation of society may be laid with better material than those who are so light that they have floated over the Sierra Nevada to the gold mines.” Lyman understood that Brigham Young had fervently urged Latter-day Saints to remain in their assigned intermountain settlements and only those who had specifically disregarded such counsel were likely to be found residing in California.<sup>2</sup>

In early 1851, President Brigham Young reluctantly authorized the planting of a Southern California Mormon colony. He recognized the need for a snow-free wagon route to the coast and control of its southern terminus both for freighting goods from the outside world and a friendly way station, or “resting place,” for converts arriving from abroad by sea. On 23 February, Elders Lyman and Rich were officially commissioned to lead a company of prospective settlers and preside over them as Church leaders, aiming to establish a colony as a coastal stronghold for the gathering of the Latter-day Saints. Several weeks later, just before they departed for their mission, President Young and his counselors wrote to Lyman and Rich to specify other aspects of their assignment. They were to search for other “way station” locations between Iron County, Utah, and Southern California, and the new colony was to become a source of such semitropical products as olive oil, wine, cotton, and sugar. The tone of this letter was cordial and supportive, certainly displaying more interest in the venture than has often been attributed to Brigham Young.<sup>3</sup> Yet it is true that in fact he soon became less than supportive of the Southern California enterprise.

There are several possible reasons for the apparent alienation of President Young from the colony. The most obvious of these has to do with the number of people seemingly anxious to leave the Utah center of Zion to participate in the venture. Other factors, more difficult to document, relate to Brigham Young’s growing perception that the California Saints, and perhaps some of their leaders, were failing to follow his direction carefully.

It is now established that during the early Mormon settlement of the Great Basin, which Brigham Young is given so much acclaim for directing, there was actually much less consistency of method than was previously assumed. Still, the typical pattern was for a bishop to be selected and a dozen or so families “called” to



accompany him to settle the place designated by Church leaders. In the case of San Bernardino, Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich personally selected families they wished to take to California. Sometimes, as in the case of William D. Kartchner, extra incentive was asserted. Kartchner claimed that when he initially declined to be a part of the California colony, Apostle Lyman "Said that if I Refused to go he would cause me to have a worse mission."<sup>4</sup> Kartchner and a considerable number of "Mississippi Saints," whom Lyman would have met several years before at Pueblo, Colorado, participated with varying degrees of faithfulness in establishing San Bernardino.

It is not certain just how many persons were recruited for the Southern California colony, but it is clear there was surprise mingled with the oft-noted disappointment at the number who appeared at Payson, Utah, prepared to depart with Lyman and Rich for the new settlement. Kartchner's diary is again revealing on this point. He noted, "it was seen a Grate many more than was called was moving with us & Prest. B. Young and H. C. Kimball called a meeting at this Place & Heber Preached and Discouraged many from going." Since 437 individuals departed in the company anyway, the number who previously intended to go must have been even larger.<sup>5</sup> Brigham Young's Manuscript History, written by clerks close to him, states that his original plan intended for some twenty families to accompany his designated agents. When he arrived at Payson, President Young declared he was "sick at the sight of so many of the Saints running off to California." In his mind, they were abandoning the kingdom he was striving to build and were succumbing to the enticements of the corrupt outside world. He was so angered by this that he chose not even to address the company of pioneers as they departed. From then on, the San Bernardino colony seems to have held a place distant from the affections of the highest Church leader.<sup>6</sup>

En route south, Elders Lyman and Rich took every occasion to communicate to President Young on their progress and possibly persuade him his unfavorable assessment of the company was unfounded. Before leaving the southernmost Utah settlement, they reported that 111 men (which must have been most of the men in the company) "reported themselves as willing to obey counsel," meaning willing to follow the direction of their ecclesiastical superiors. This was repeated while the emigrants were encamped in Cajon Pass just prior to the purchase of the San Bernardino ranch.<sup>7</sup>

During the first two years in Southern California, the community spirit in San Bernardino could hardly have been stronger. Even



on the initial journey, undoubtedly one of the most arduous pioneer treks in American history, they had to occasionally pool their efforts in a high level of teamwork. At least one steep mountain incline necessitated hitching the draft animals together to pull each of the wagons to the top, a process so exhausting that even the most faithful diarists made no entries during the days thus engaged. After the San Bernardino ranch was finally secured, which allowed the entire company to remain intact, the normal process of settlement was interrupted by reports of Indian uprisings. This compelled construction of a stockade fortress accomplished through the almost ceaseless labor of all available hands. Although the Indian menace rapidly dissipated, almost all of the colonists lived in houses within the fort for more than two years, in a confined space that would test even the most neighborly, with no evidence recorded of anything but continuous harmony.<sup>8</sup>

One reason for the prolonged stay in the stockade was the community effort at clearing, planting, and fencing a two thousand acre grainfield. While much of the work was accomplished in unison, the land was clearly apportioned among the participants. On several occasions, when Elders Lyman and Rich's crops needed attention and they were engaged on colony business, the entire labor force of San Bernardino turned out to lend a hand. Thus was spent the first Independence Day in the new settlement. Similar efforts accomplished construction of the storage facilities for the harvested grain and digging the millrace essential to the operation of a flour mill. An even more demanding community undertaking was the thousand man-days required to build a road into the mountains to the immediate north, enabling some enterprising citizens to tap the timber resources and engage in a lumbering industry. And again, when the sawmill of Lyman and Rich burned, a voluntary requisition of labor was furnished to make rebuilding possible. Most impressive of all community undertakings were the financial commitments and sacrifices many made to assist the colony leaders in the purchase of the ranch.<sup>9</sup>

When the Mormon agents first negotiated with the Lugo brothers for the San Bernardino ranch, they hoped to accomplish the purchase of between eighty and one hundred thousand acres of good land for between fifty and sixty thousand dollars. But the proprietors drove a hard bargain, and Elders Lyman and Rich eventually agreed to a price of \$77,500. They were compelled to journey to northern California and through prosperous Mormons there secure loans for the seven thousand dollar down payment at gold rush interest rates of 3 percent per month. The two Apostles purchased the ranch in their own names, without Church aid, with



the understanding that their fellow colonists would support them financially by purchasing individual plots after the property was surveyed and in the meantime exert every effort to help meet the difficult first year's payments. Early in 1852, prior to any harvest in the new land, the San Bernardino Saints agreed to sell livestock to buyers then in their midst to the extent necessary to meet the approaching second payment. By March, sixteen thousand dollars had been raised and the immediate obligation met. Much of the remaining balance of over fifty thousand dollars was also apparently refinanced at that time by the firm of Burgoyne and Ness of San Francisco, payable in two years with the mortgage of the entire ranch given as security.

At the time, this venture appeared to be financially sound, but several developments soon occurred with rather disastrous consequences. First of all, the economic boom accompanying the gold rush was rapidly subsiding, and the San Bernardino Saints consequently had more difficulty selling their expected cash products of flour and lumber in quantity and at the price expected. Vastly more devastating to the community's future was the discovery that the original San Bernardino land grant had specified that the owners were to actually possess only eight square leagues of land, less than half of what the Lugos had used as rangeland. Lyman and Rich had undoubtedly been negligent in not having the fine print of the documents examined by someone more competent in Spanish than William Stout, one of their brethren. Although they appealed to the United States Land Commission then substantiating old claims, when that body made its final ruling the Mormon leaders were informed that eight square leagues or thirty-five thousand acres was the extent of the legal grant.

Elders Lyman and Rich were given the right to select from any of the lands they assumed they had purchased. But in a very real sense this was a blow from which the financial agents of the community never recovered. Not only was there less land to sell to recoup the debt, but there was also suddenly a very large amount of government land available at what would likely be a substantially lower price than Lyman and Rich could offer. It would be more temptation than some could withstand to disregard promises to purchase lands through the Church leaders and attempt preemption of the adjoining public domain.

In the first local Church conference after the bad news from the land commission, in October 1853, the proceedings were highlighted, according to Lyman and Rich, by the participants reaffirming that they would "use their utmost exertions with all the means they might be able to influence to meet promptly the next and



last payments for the rancho of San Bernardino.” Those present also displayed marked generosity in payment and pledges to the regular Church financial obligations of tithing and contributions to the Perpetual Emigration Fund. By this time division of San Bernardino into individual lots available for approximately one hundred dollars each was under way, but the Church leaders observed that since the community intended to “bind all our energies to the payment” of what became known as the ranch debt, few individual improvements were expected to commence that year.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, the population of the colony was being enhanced by Latter-day Saints arriving from northern California, Utah, and missionary fields of the South Pacific. By the October conference of 1853, the official Church membership in the area was just over one thousand, with new additions coming regularly. Possibly Elders Lyman and Rich had received some hints of official dissatisfaction at the rapid growth—at the expense of other Mormon communities. At any rate, as the year began they wrote a letter to the editor of the official Church newspaper, the *Deseret News*, denying reports that they had encouraged Utah Church members to emigrate to California. They reaffirmed the principles of colonization strongly held by Brigham Young that “the place for the saints is wherever the counsel of the Lord through the presidency of the church may place them.” They stressed it was “the privilege and duty of all saints, without thinking for a moment,” to go to whatever locality Church authorities sent them and to remain there until released. All of this, it was stressed, would be in the interest of service to Jesus Christ in the upbuilding of his kingdom on the earth. They further stated they had been sent to California to build the same kingdom. But, they stressed, they were not to accomplish this “by pulling down one part” elsewhere. They continued pointedly, “if any think to leave [Utah] without counsel, and think to be fellowshipped by us, they are mistaken.” They concluded by frankly stating “those who love not God sufficiently to serve him in one place, will not do it in another” and expressed hope that such persons, if interested in going to California, would take the northern route, which, they said, would “sooner bring them to the palace of the Golden God” and spare San Bernardino “the curse of their faithlessness.”<sup>11</sup>

Later that summer, after the disappointments concerning the land grant were fully understood, Lyman and Rich admitted their first apprehensions of potential internal dissension. After offering condolences over a recent conflict with Indians in Utah, the San Bernardino proprietors ominously stated that the “foes against



whom we have to contend are not shut out by adobe walls." They went on to explain that such foes arise in the form of the "spirits [or attitudes] that those who came here bring with them." This, it was said, was the same spirit of discontent "as caused them to come [to San Bernardino] in opposition to the counsel they should have respected elsewhere." Though conceding the results of these "principle troubles" were not yet apparent, they expressed hope that the cause they were striving to uphold would prevail. Certainly the fears thus expressed were well founded. If such an element, unwilling to follow counsel of ecclesiastical leaders, became dominant in the San Bernardino community, the self-sacrifice necessary to complete the land purchase would not continue.<sup>12</sup>

In a very real sense, San Bernardino was coming to serve as a means of escape from the physiographical harshness of Utah and, to some, the theocratic despotism of Brigham Young's Mormon empire. There is also some evidence that the California settlement became a haven for those becoming disillusioned with the faith because of the practice of plural marriage, finally announced publicly in 1852. One contemporary observer, H. C. Rolfe, describing the relative attractiveness of residence in California compared to Utah for some Latter-day Saints, suggested that the presence of the San Bernardino "branch of their people gave them a plausible excuse" for relocating there.<sup>13</sup> Apparently a significant number of Utah Church members were convinced they had had enough of their present situation but may not yet have concluded to completely sever their ties with the Church. San Bernardino could serve as a means of transition, where they could escape much of what they recognized as unpalatable while maintaining at least nominal ties to the religious movement to which they had previously held strong commitments.<sup>14</sup>

Members of the Church hierarchy also regarded California as a haven for less faithful Latter-day Saints. Brigham Young publicly exhorted those who could not abide the notably strict rules of his regime to emigrate to California. In the semiannual Church conference of April 1854, President Young discussed the stream of Mormons leaving Utah for California in terms of the biblical separation of the sheep from the goats. In an accompanying discourse on the same occasion, Apostle Orson Hyde mentioned the same subject in terms of the New Testament parables of the sower and separation of the wheat from the tares. The tares were clearly those abandoning the Mormon Zion.<sup>15</sup> That same year, Brigham Young wrote to Apostle Parley P. Pratt, then engaged in missionary labors in Latin America and the Pacific Islands, advising him to carefully interview the Latter-day Saints he came



into contact with and ascertain the extent of their commitment and obedience to authority. President Young frankly instructed Elder Pratt that "those who were faithful and determined to remain so" should be encouraged to come to Utah; "all others to remain in California which would be a strainer to the streams from that direction leading into the reservoir" of Utah Mormondom.<sup>16</sup>

Early in 1854, Brigham Young inquired as to the identities of individuals suspected of being uncommitted to the cause of the California mission. In answer, Elders Lyman and Rich mentioned the "good men" who had come with their original company, along with four of the "Brooklyn Saints" who had joined the colony from the north. In a subsequent letter on the same subject they also listed a dozen brethren added to the community from the missions of the South Pacific. But that was the extent of the number of San Bernardino men the California Apostles judged to be fully faithful. They then clarified further the potential problem they perceived by saying their "present prospective troubles with the people arise from a clap of hangers-on who have no interest but to seek whatever advantage may arise from the labors of others in building up the common cause." In their exasperation, they singled out a man prominent in early Mormon history, Henry G. Sherwood, for special criticism. The offense they indicted him for sheds further light on the type of behavior the Church leaders perceived as offensive. They reported Sherwood "has totally failed to do what he promised us when on the way here which was to operate in connection with us in the accomplishment of our labors here." This undoubtedly alluded to his not participating in land payments and acquisitions through Lyman and Rich. They also complained that he considered himself "too old to be managed" by the relatively younger designated leaders.<sup>17</sup>

Elders Lyman and Rich made this complaint near the time when another payment was due on the ranch mortgage. They had been optimistic they could raise the amount needed, but when the time came only eight thousand dollars had been raised locally and but little obtained elsewhere. This was nowhere close to the amount required, and after further schemes aimed at raising funds failed they were compelled to sign a new note for thirty-five thousand dollars secured by a new mortgage.

Clearly many of the San Bernardino Saints were tiring of the tremendous burden of the ranch debt and were growing increasingly more inclined to get on with developing their individual property obtained in 1854 mostly on credit. One of the most detailed contemporary descriptions of the city, by visiting Judge Benjamin Hayes, described construction of a hundred new



buildings, along with other notable improvements, during that summer alone. Such developments certainly drained considerable financial resources away from the mortgage assessments the Church leaders were ardently seeking.<sup>18</sup>

At year's end, Charles C. Rich was in Salt Lake City, where on 10 December 1854 he spoke at the Tabernacle on the subject of unity and obedience. He was clearly referring to individuals of the San Bernardino community when he said that "some persons get an idea they cannot work so well here for the building up of the Kingdom [of God]," so they go to California or some other place according to their personal wishes. This, he declared, was not the correct procedure; he reiterated, "where the authorities put us is the proper place for us to be."<sup>19</sup>

Such exhortations were too late to have any effect on just that type of emigrant who arrived at San Bernardino at about the same time Elder Rich was delivering his address. Amasa Lyman reported that they had come from Cedar City and other settlements and but few of them had in the first several months "manifested a disposition to renew their connection with the church" through the method then in use of rebaptism. Later in the year, Lyman learned that some of these new arrivals had written to friends in Utah stating that San Bernardino Church leaders had allowed them rights and privileges in the Church even beyond those they had enjoyed when in full fellowship in their former congregations. Elder Lyman denied this, saying that on the contrary he treated those who did not bring vouchers of good standing from their former bishop as if they had been "cut off from the church." Only those who subsequently signified desire to rejoin the Church and were judged to be worthy were allowed to resume fellowship and be admitted into the San Bernardino congregation. And even this, Lyman assured, some had attempted but failed to accomplish.<sup>20</sup>

After his denials of leniency, Lyman philosophically described his situation in presiding over such people as were being added to his ecclesiastical charge by saying, "men come here from other settlements in the mountain country to escape those hardships their love of the truth would not strengthen them to endure." And, he continued, "unfortunately for them, their already overtaxed capacity for practical righteousness does not undergo any improvement" by their taking up residence in San Bernardino.<sup>21</sup>

Elder Lyman's personal diary sheds further light on his feelings toward incoming Saints such as those from Cedar City. He reported that some of them were contemplating settling in the Yucaipa area. This was a valley so distant from the center of the San Bernardino community and the current activities of the ranch



proprietors that those anticipating which lands Lyman and Rich would finally select as their allotted holdings considered Yucaipa a safe place to locate, in hopes of a subsequent land purchase at a reduced price from the federal government. Lyman had recently referred disdainfully to those similarly engaged in the area as nothing more than trespassers.<sup>22</sup> In the later period of marked antagonism between Church leaders and dissidents inside and outside the Church, opposition was clearly centered in the Yucaipa area.

This opposition has generally been said to have begun with political developments during the San Bernardino County supervisorial elections of 1855. While this was certainly a catalyst that brought the conflict into the open, Mormon leaders had been worried about the lack of internal unity and commitment for more than a year previous and were particularly sensitive to signs of disunity because of implications for disposition of the lands with which they were so heavily burdened.

As the 21 April 1855 county elections approached, Amasa Lyman followed the common Mormon practice of the highest ranking Church leaders in the vicinity nominating the candidates they deemed most desirable for office. In this case, Daniel Starks and William Crosby were chosen as supervisor candidates. However, several other Church members, including Benjamin F. Grouard and Frederick M. Van Leuven, acting independently, also decided to contest for those offices. In the election, these unapproved candidates were soundly defeated, with Van Leuven gaining only nineteen votes and Grouard only thirteen, while Crosby garnered one hundred votes and Starks ninety-nine.<sup>23</sup>

Elder Lyman simply noted at the time, "there was some opposition from a faction headed by V. J. Herring, F. M. Van Leuven and B. F. Grouard." Henry G. Boyle's more detailed diary account further states, "these men came out in opposition to Amasa's nominations, contrary to counsel" and exhibited a "regular mob spirit."<sup>24</sup> There are no contemporary accounts of the local election campaign, but reference to a "regular mob spirit" probably meant simply defiance of vested authority. This was, however, a serious offense at the time in Mormondom, and thus Grouard, Van Leuven, and Herring were summoned before the Church leaders "to make satisfaction or be disfellowshipped." At the appointed time, they arrived with a group of supporters, who, it was noted, "were not in the habit of meeting" at the Church headquarters. Elder Lyman proceeded to explain the nature of their offense and the serious consequences he anticipated might accrue from a course of independent political conduct. The defendants replied that the



Latter-day Saints were “slaves and not men” because they followed the counsel of ecclesiastical leaders in political affairs. They further argued that under such circumstances individual citizens were denied “the privilege of thinking for [themselves].” Since the accused had no intention of confessing wrongdoing or retracting previous statements, they were disfellowshipped. When they subsequently accelerated their opposition to Church authority, they were excommunicated.<sup>25</sup>

These actions on the part of Amasa Lyman and his associates appear to be an overreaction to political activities American citizens were clearly entitled to. The harshness of the punishments further exacerbated the internal dissension in the community. Yet Elder Lyman was acting in the accustomed manner practiced and expected by Brigham Young and other high Church officials in Utah. The Church hierarchy in the Intermountain region, in their isolated circumstances, could demand and receive political submissiveness until 1891, although frequently criticized by outsiders for such actions. But in San Bernardino, as elsewhere in the nation, there was no toleration for such ecclesiastical interference in political matters, and thus the Mormon actions only provoked further alienation.<sup>26</sup>

By August 1855, the community clerk-historian, Richard Hopkins, could write, “the spirit of dissention is becoming more evident; some men who have occupied prominent positions in the church here are very violent against [the local Church] authorities.” He noted that this spirit was becoming both more open and more widespread. He then observed that this situation fulfilled a prediction by Lyman early in the colony’s existence that if there were trouble at San Bernardino “it would be started by those in our midst.”<sup>27</sup> Later that fall, Hopkins reported “the spirit of apostasy is daily becoming more evident,” with former Church members verbally abusing the presiding authorities and “swearing vengeance on all Saints.” Later, he described conditions in San Bernardino as the antithesis of those that had prevailed in the early days of the settlement, saying, “it is almost impossible to insure a concert of action upon any object of public interest”; instead, “the grand object appears to be the aggrandizement of private interests.” He concluded that by that time in a city still comprised mainly of individuals who at some time had espoused Mormonism, “to be a Latter-day Saint is becoming quite unpopular.”<sup>28</sup>

Early in 1855, Brigham Young wrote a letter to Amasa Lyman which is most significant in revealing his attitude toward San Bernardino and many of the Church members located there. He observed that “it often times occurs that men and women are



tolerable good saints anywhere else except with the saints." President Young confessed to thinking that such "half-hearted" Latter-day Saints were the "only ones which this generation [of the world] are worthy to meet" since they preferred "to be with the world where they can see, hear and feel the continued profanity and abomination of the wicked," while "the pure-minded and strictly virtuous . . . so abhor the wickedness of this generation that if they could have their desires granted would never again behold a devil in any form."<sup>29</sup> Clearly, Brigham Young had categorized Church members into two basic classes, and only the less faithful type should live in contact with the corrupt outside world. It is impossible to ascertain whether his conclusions were based primarily on the reports of Lyman and Rich or whether his attitude influenced them. Certainly all agreed to some extent, and such assumptions would figure markedly in the future of the San Bernardino colony.

By mid-1855, Elders Lyman and Rich were candidly expressing doubts about the future of San Bernardino to President Brigham Young. Lyman asserted that if the colony could not be made useful "as a home and resting place for the Saints," it was "hardly worth the toil and anxiety it was costing."<sup>30</sup> Rich confided that he would be glad if he could report that "righteousness was on the increase" in the area, but he went on to complain that a few more immigrations such as had recently arrived from Utah "would place the balance on the wrong side." He once again concluded that "men who will not be governed in one place will not be governed in another." At this time, Rich confessed he looked forward to once again living in the relatively harmonious environs of Utah.<sup>31</sup>

In answer to one of these letters, Brigham Young revealed a lack of confidence in the colony's future, stating, "we cannot afford to spare good men enough to sustain such a place as that is soon likely to be."<sup>32</sup> In another letter addressed to Rich at the end of 1855, President Young cited a Brother Lewis as comparing current troubles in their midst to the bitter anti-Mormon conflict in Illinois at the time of Joseph Smith's assassination, saying San Bernardino was "just half way between Carthage and Warsaw." The highest Church leader predicted that either the San Bernardino Church members would incline to the ways of their neighbors and the "spirit of the world" or else the past history of cupidity, hate, and violence would repeat itself.<sup>33</sup>

By the beginning of 1856, the growing number of Mormon dissenters, labeled by Elder Lyman "factionalists," was fully united with the considerable number of non-Mormons who had settled in the vicinity and had become increasingly disenchanted with LDS church domination. While the political opposition became



full-blown and continued, the most bitter confrontations of 1856 stemmed from disagreements over land ownership.

Here again, the Mormon leaders appear in an unreasonable light. They delayed several years before finally designating which lands would ultimately be claimed from within the larger domain they originally thought they had purchased. They were entirely within the law in this delay, but it certainly did nothing to promote harmony and understanding among those already inclined in the opposite direction. Part of the problem was entirely beyond control of the Church proprietors. Since the first days of the settlement, most agricultural activity had been at the big field situated on high ground adjacent to the mountains and foothills. These fields had been notably productive during the first two years, largely, as it turned out, because these were years of unusually heavy precipitation. When more normal weather patterns resumed, production at the big field dropped drastically. After several poor harvests there, the San Bernardino leaders realized they needed to look to the irrigable lands closer to the Santa Ana River bottom to the south and the more naturally moist soil of the Yucaipa Valley to the east for a productive future. Since these were areas where those least inclined to cooperate with Lyman and Rich in their land disposition schemes had gravitated, conflict was bound to ensue.

A few individual examples sufficiently illustrate the details of the lands dispute. The most oft-cited case involved Jerome Benson, a former Mormon who arrived from Provo well after the colony was established and after estrangement from the Church because of disagreements with some of its leaders in Utah. Being a man described in even the most favorable account as "of rather aggressive disposition," often at odds with his neighbors, Benson was not regarded by the Church proprietors as the type of citizen they wished to welcome into their community. Therefore, they quoted him a significantly higher price for land than most of the more desirable purchasers were accustomed to paying. Upon learning of this slight, the newly embittered Benson left the Mormon city and took up land several miles south, across the Santa Ana River, in an area commonly expected to be designated as public domain as soon as Lyman and Rich made their final land selections. But after he had made considerable improvements on the property, the ranch owners notified him he was trespassing on their lands. With encouragement from other opponents of the landowners, Benson refused to leave, fortified his home lot with breastworks and a cannon, and defied the Mormon leaders to remove him. Although the initial court proceedings for eviction favored Lyman and Rich, the stubborn Benson remained on the land until bargain prices for



unencumbered property enticed him to relocate on land some of the Latter-day Saints would abandon within less than two years of the dispute.<sup>34</sup>

Frederick M. Van Leuven was another Mormon who arrived in San Bernardino after its initial settlement. He immediately located on land east of Benson's near present Loma Linda, also believing it was beyond the holdings of Lyman and Rich. Eventually, sometime after coming into conflict with the Church authorities through his political independence, he was notified that the land he was occupying would be included in the eight leagues of property the Church proprietors were designating as their final holdings. Van Leuven submitted rather quietly and withdrew to Yucaipa, where he arranged with John Brown for a portion of the land he was using there. Subsequently, he and Brown would be evicted from this area also.<sup>35</sup>

John Brown had moved to Yucaipa sometime after Diego Sepulveda, a relative of the Lugo family, vacated that portion of the ranch upon its sale to Lyman and Rich. Previously associated with the Mormons in Colorado, Utah, and northern California, Brown was baptized into the Church soon after arriving in San Bernardino in 1852. He cooperated fully with his Latter-day Saint neighbors during his first years in the area, playing a prominent role in separating San Bernardino County off from Los Angeles County and in attempts to curb Indian raids on livestock in the valley. Yet for some reason whatever ardor he had possessed for Mormonism faded, and he gravitated into the faction most opposed to the Church leaders and ranch proprietors. He was undoubtedly one of the individuals Amasa Lyman referred to as trespassing at Yucaipa.

Elder Lyman's feelings probably stemmed from the fact that Brown had neither paid rent nor purchased any of the land he had occupied for several years. And sometime thereafter, when a paying tenant, Vincente Lugo, offered to reoccupy the Yucaipa ranch, Rich informed Brown he would have to either pay the back rent, purchase the ranch, or promptly vacate the premises. After several conferences on the matter, Brown promised to move his livestock and family as requested if all outstanding debts were canceled. Brown later alleged that as he returned home that evening in April 1856, someone he believed to be a Mormon fired shots at him from ambush. Thereafter he changed his stance on the ranch occupancy and summoned his friends for consultation. A dozen men, including some of the most prominent non-Mormon neighbors and the most vocal apostate Mormons, signed a remonstrance supporting Brown's refusal to leave. Charging he was being forced out under duress, they stated, "we believe the land upon which he



lives to be public domain . . . and firmly insist that he, John Brown, shall remain where he is without further molestation until the general government shall determine" the outcome of the case. Although their legal position was weak, these men were fully determined to stand against the Mormon leaders' seeming arbitrariness. Brown subsequently vacated the disputed land, but the antagonisms between the clearly divided factions on occasion during the ensuing year reached the verge of armed confrontation.<sup>36</sup>

Elders Lyman and Rich had long understood they were expected to go to England to assume leadership of the European missions whenever they could make the necessary financial disengagements and arrangements in San Bernardino. Neither Apostle is known to have offered anything but encouragement of the assignment change. Yet there is in the subsequent developments a perceptible difference in attitude toward the California colony between Lyman and Rich. At the end of 1855, Brigham Young complied with a previous inquiry and instructed Rich to move his family back to Utah. Several unforeseen complications caused more than a year of delays, but there is every indication the junior Apostle remained anxious to make the Intermountain Area home for himself and all his families. On the other hand, Elder Lyman apparently intended to maintain his direct association with San Bernardino, planning for several of his wives and families to remain there while he was on his mission and doubtless expecting to return himself when his present assignment was completed.<sup>37</sup>

A crucial development in the attempt to resolve the ranch debt obligations still hanging over Lyman and Rich was enlisting Ebenezer Hanks, a faithful Latter-day Saint who had met with considerable financial success in the northern California gold fields, as an equal and eventually most active partner in the affairs of the San Bernardino ranch. Even with the pressure of high interest rates and the constant harassment by impatient creditors, the ranch proprietors could well contemplate substantial economic rewards for their pains once the debts were repaid. Outstanding land payments owed the company on approximately one quarter of the ranch land already sold would virtually cancel the remaining financial obligations. Whatever land was disposed of thereafter would be largely profit. Undoubtedly Hanks understood there were risks in the undertaking and joined the partnership partly as his own mission to relieve his Apostle-partners from such temporal cares. But the fact remains that there still existed much potential for rich economic rewards from the enterprise.<sup>38</sup>

In March 1857, prior to his departure from San Bernardino, Amasa Lyman addressed the Latter-day Saints assembled there at



a Church conference. He reminded his congregation that they had come to build the kingdom of God in the area, saying, "if that consists in planting vineyards, fruit trees, making farms, and building houses," they had accomplished their purpose. But the real task had been to improve the lives of individuals in their daily application of the principles of their religion. Some of the listeners were undoubtedly succeeding in this realm too, but compared to the number of potential Latter-day Saints in the area the success rate was far from outstanding. Another major thrust of this farewell address, and a similar one by Elder Rich, focused on the continuing obligations of the San Bernardino Saints to complete payments on the ranch. The Apostles requested the community members to pledge their support to Hanks and William J. Cox, who as stake president would be the presiding Church authority in the area.<sup>39</sup>

During the next several months, President Cox was hard-pressed to hold his brethren to their ranch commitments. Whether intentionally or not, Elder Rich had seriously undermined such effort by discouraging a Brother Durfee from purchasing additional San Bernardino land, counseling him to save his means so that he would be prepared to move his family away when the time came. When Cox heard reports of this, he counseled the brother to keep such stories to himself, but the word had already spread. The stake president soon addressed the Saints at the regular Sunday worship services and reminded them they had recently "covenanted to sustain Brother Hanks in his exertions to redeem the pledges that had been made to build up the cause in this land." He went on to advise his listeners that Latter-day Saints should "prepare to live here or go where called." But, he continued, for the present they were in their proper field of labor; they were "called to stay here," and when a different call came they would know it. By continuing such meetings and exhortations throughout the summer, Cox was successful in maintaining a good deal of cooperation in the community effort to lift the ranch mortgage.<sup>40</sup> In fact, in early August, Ebenezer Hanks wrote his absent partners to report that their business was increasing so rapidly that it appeared to be more than he could handle. A large portion of this activity was land sales, including sales to Mormons. Although by this time a considerable number of San Bernardino Saints hoped to return to Utah, there is no solid evidence that Church officials intended to totally abandon the Southern California settlement.<sup>41</sup>

During the summer of 1857, California newspapers were full of the kind of reports that were leading President James Buchanan to send U.S. Army troops to quell the so-called Mormon Rebellion. These were rapidly eroding what for several years had been a most



cordial relationship between the citizens of San Bernardino and those throughout the rest of the state of California. Among the subsequent news items were many details of the movements of the military and their Mormon opponents. No one was certain what the final outcome would be, but Ebenezer Hanks was probably correct in observing that a clash of arms or something close to it would cause the faithful Latter-day Saints to hasten to Utah much faster than anything else might. In the meantime, they could be of immeasurable assistance to their beleaguered brethren by gathering much-needed arms, ammunition, and supplies for possible use against the invading army, should such prove necessary.<sup>42</sup>

It was lurid reports of the Mountain Meadows Massacre and other subsequent mistreatment of overland emigrant trains in the fall of 1857 that ultimately caused the demise of San Bernardino as a haven for practicing members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Until the alienation of the non-Mormon community of Southern California in the wake of those events, there is every indication the colony was to continue, if not flourish. It was only after anti-Mormon hostility mounted in the late autumn, more than four months after Brigham Young received notice of the approach of Johnston's Army, that the Church leader summoned the faithful to abandon their California homes to return to Utah.<sup>43</sup>

Late in 1856, the presiding Apostles had instructed the San Bernardino high council and bishopric "upon the necessity of a reformation in the San Bernardino branch." Similar endeavors were underway elsewhere in Mormondom. Besides vocal encouragement to individual Church members to renew their commitments to the faith through rebaptism, there was also considerable interest in eliminating from Church standing those whose lives were not judged to be in conformity with Latter-day Saint standards of behavior. Thus a number of people were disfellowshipped and excommunicated at this time. Elders Lyman and Rich reported frequently to Brigham Young on the progress of the reformation, but they were never able to state the number fully recommitted had reached beyond five hundred souls. This was probably only one-fifth of the number residing in the vicinity who on some earlier occasion had been baptized as members of the Church.<sup>44</sup>

By the summer of 1857, it was no longer any secret that many of those who had remained most committed to the LDS religion and its leaders were contemplating removal back to Zion in the mountains of Utah. Brigham Young had made numerous public and private comments to that effect for more than a year. When the official call to return arrived in early November 1857, the



scene was described by Henry Boyle as the obedient “busy selling out, or rather sacrificing their property to their enemies and fitting up” for the return trip. He reported, “The apostates and mobocrats are prowling around trying to raise a row, trying to stir up the people to blood shed and every wicked thing.” Continuing most gloomily, he declared, “O, is it not hell to live in the midst of such spirits? They first thirst for and covet our property, our goods and our chatels, then they thirst for our blood.” He concluded, “I think I shall feel like I had been released from Hell when I shall have got away from here [San Bernardino].”<sup>45</sup>

Probably the most telling commentary on the individuals comprising the citizenry of Mormon San Bernardino after a half dozen years of development was their reaction to Brigham Young’s recall. The year 1857 had seen perhaps the best harvest yet, and flour prices were double what they been several years before. Many who remembered the colder climate, the less productive soil, and the greater personal restrictions prevalent in Utah chose not to heed the request to return. In the words of the late Eugene Campbell, they “chose to forsake the church rather than leave their homes” in San Bernardino.<sup>46</sup>

At the end of 1856, San Bernardino was estimated to have about three thousand inhabitants. George Beattie’s careful study of the make-up of this population concluded that at the time 84 percent of the residents of the area were or had been Mormons. Of these, about 55 percent, which would be almost fourteen hundred, responded to Brigham Young’s call to return to Utah. Since in the next several years some of these went back to San Bernardino in disillusionment, it would be fair to estimate that approximately half of the Latter-day Saints proved committed enough to heed the orders of their ecclesiastical leaders and the other half did not. In comparison with the near unanimity still prevailing in the Mormon settlements of the Great Basin, this was an extremely high percentage of individuals unwilling to meet the requirement to sacrifice their homes or whatever else was asked of them, a basic tenet of the Latter-day Saint religion.<sup>47</sup>

Even though it appears that the Church leaders hoped to maintain at least nominal ties with the San Bernardino colony, until the bitterness surrounding the Mountain Meadows Massacre shattered any such possibilities, it seems likely that, conscious of the declining proportion of fully committed Mormons in San Bernardino, they chose to remove those yet faithful from that negative environment. Sad experiences in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois had proved that life among unbelievers, particularly apostates, was next to impossible. Although one of the initial



purposes for the settlement was apparently to attempt retrieval of some who had strayed from the paths of obedience to Church teachings and authority in coming to California in the first place, experience with the large number of nominal Saints who had flooded to San Bernardino had proved disappointing. With the abundant evidence of lack of success in this endeavor, the advantages of further efforts at maintaining a direct influence in California was not deemed by Church leaders to be worth the cost.

Brigham Young had alluded to the California settlement as a “strainer” screening out those of weak faith prior to their moving on to the center of Zion in the mountains. But to a greater extent, the San Bernardino settlement acted as a magnet for attracting uncommitted Church members from throughout the other Mormon settlements. Thus occurred the reverse of the Church leaders’ intended “gathering.” Those whose common bond was their weakening attachment to the principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and an unwillingness to “follow counsel” of the Church leaders congregated in the settlement that was most distant both physically and spiritually from the center of Mormondom.<sup>48</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, 23 and 30 July 1850, Brigham Young Papers, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>First Presidency to Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich, 17 March 1851, Amasa M. Lyman Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>4</sup>William Decatur Kartchner, “Autobiography,” 35, photocopy of holograph, Archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo (hereafter cited as Lee Library).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 35–36; Eugene E. Campbell, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847–1869* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1988), 70–71.

<sup>6</sup>“Manuscript History of the Church, Brigham Young Period, 1844–1877,” 20 March 1851, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>7</sup>Amasa M. Lyman to Brigham Young, 22 April 1851, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>8</sup>Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt* (1938; reprint, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976), 371–81, is one of the best accounts of the journey; Andrew Jenson, comp., “History of San Bernardino, California,” MS, LDS Church Archives, apparently based primarily on the record of San Bernardino clerk-historian Richard Hopkins, is a major primary source for day-to-day events; George W. Beattie and Helen P. Beattie, *Heritage of the Valley: San Bernardino’s First Century* (1939; reprint, Oakland, Calif.: Biobooks, 1951), 170–237, is the best overall account of the Mormons in San Bernardino; Joseph S. Wood, “The Mormon Settlement in San Bernardino, 1851–1857” (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1967), 74–167, is a good work on the subject, as is Leonard J. Arrington, *Charles C. Rich: Mormon General and Western Frontiersman* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1974), 153–213.

<sup>9</sup>Jenson, “History of San Bernardino,” 25 November–15 December 1851; and 23 February, 23 April–12 May, 8 June, 5 July 1852. Amasa Lyman reported to Church headquarters, “It is our feelings that the spirit of the Gospel is on the increase in this branch of the church, the best evidences of which are exhibited in the disposition of the people to observe and be governed by the council ordained for their edification. They still manifest a disposition to unite their efforts with ours to accomplish the payment for the place and to defer until that time the receiving of their private inheritances, or improving the same,



so our improvements until that time will be the creation of those public conveniences, such as mills, grain houses, such as will suit our convenience best and favor the payment for the place, which, when accomplished will allow us the privilege to locate our inheritance and improve the same, without the chances of their being swept away from us for the indebtedness against the place. Our present arrangements plan this in the spring and summer of 1854 . . . will give us the full and undisputed right and possession of the land of San Bernardino and in addition to this the most of our brethren connected with us in this labor will by the appropriation of their labour and means have secured to themselves a credit that will go far toward the payment for their places" (Amasa M. Lyman to Brigham Young, 11 September 1852, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives).

<sup>10</sup>Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, 21 October 1853, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>11</sup>Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich to Editor of *News*, 27 February 1853, *Deseret News*, 5 March 1853, entered in Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 27 February 1853, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>12</sup>Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, 31 October 1853, Lyman Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>13</sup>Horace C. Rolfe, "The Early Political History of San Bernardino County," in H. C. Rolfe Scrapbook, San Bernardino County Library.

<sup>14</sup>John Brown, Jr., and James Boyd, *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*, 3 vols. (Madison, Wis.: Western Historical Association, 1922), 1:48, states, "For the most part the San Bernardino Mormons did not believe in polygamy. . . . The author, who with his father had lived among the Mormons since early in the settlement's history, should have known 'whereof he spoke.' " Eugene E. Campbell, "A History of The Church of Jesus of Christ of Latter-day Saints in California, 1846–1946" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1952), observes, "the main objections these disaffected members [of the Church whom missionary Henry Bigler visited at San Bernardino in 1858] made to 'gathering' to Utah were: (1) the climate and the difficulty of making a living; (2) the wife's objection to plural marriage, and (3) a rebellion against Brigham Young's high-handed authoritarianism" (281). See also Rolfe, "Early Political History of San Bernardino County."

<sup>15</sup>Journal History, 19 February, 29 October 1853; 6 April 1854. Apostle George A. Smith followed Brigham Young and Orson Hyde, saying, "The men that have left for California and complain of stringent measures, etc., went because their hearts were corrupt, and they did not love the gospel of Jesus Christ."

<sup>16</sup>"History of Brigham Young," 19 August 1854, copied into Journal History of same date.

<sup>17</sup>Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, 11 March 1854, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>18</sup>Judge Benjamin Hayes to *Southern Californian*, 19 October 1854, quoted in Beattie, *Heritage of the Valley*, 225–26.

<sup>19</sup>Quoted in Arrington, *Charles C. Rich*, 182.

<sup>20</sup>Amasa M. Lyman to Brigham Young, 8 January and 3 May 1855, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives. In the former letter, Lyman reported, "In relation to our strength here, we are rather weaker in righteousness than in numbers. The constant influence of discordant feelings is but calculated to increase an evil already in existence to increase a great extent compared to the union that should mark the labors of the Saints."

<sup>21</sup>Amasa M. Lyman to Brigham Young, 3 May 1855, Young Papers. Lyman recounted asking one disaffected sister from Cedar City why they were again locating in a Church settlement, to which she candidly (and prophetically) replied that she and her husband had "concluded that it would not be more than 2 or 3 years before that a mob would drive [the Mormons] away and then they could get land and improvements cheaper than elsewhere."

<sup>22</sup>Amasa M. Lyman, Journal, 21 November 1853 and 7 December 1854, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>23</sup>Beattie, *Heritage of the Valley*, 228–37; Lyman, Journal, 21, 22, 26 April 1855 and 20 May 1855.

<sup>24</sup>Henry G. Boyle, "Diary of Henry G. Boyle, 1832–1855," 21, 22 April 1855, Lee Library.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 22 April 1855. Ironically, some years later Amasa Lyman was defendant before other Church authorities in a case also involving freedom of conscience. At that time Lyman too would choose freedom over Church membership (see Loretta L. Hefner, "From Apostle to Apostate: The Personal Struggle of Amasa Mason Lyman," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 [Spring 1983]: 90–104).

<sup>26</sup>Rolfe, "Political History of San Bernardino."

<sup>27</sup>Jenson, "San Bernardino," 17 August 1855.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 28 November 1855.

<sup>29</sup>Brigham Young to Amasa M. Lyman, 29 January 1855, Lyman Papers.

<sup>30</sup>Amasa M. Lyman to Brigham Young, 3 May 1855, Young Papers.

<sup>31</sup>Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, 1 November and 2 December 1855, Young Papers.

<sup>32</sup>Brigham Young to Charles C. Rich, 29 November 1855, Rich Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>33</sup>Brigham Young to Charles C. Rich, 31 December 1855, Rich Papers.



<sup>34</sup>Rolfe, "Political History of San Bernardino." According to this contemporary observer, "by this time the apostolic owners of the ranch who were selling off their lands in small parcels to settlers, mostly of their own faith, had become somewhat cautious as to whom they sold and thereby enabled to become members of the community, particularly guarding against granting facilities to any who might make them trouble or be antagonistic to their influence in the community or disturb the peace and harmony thereof."

<sup>35</sup>Beattie, *Heritage of the Valley*, 239. It is not certain how long the Van Leuven family was away from the Loma Linda area, but they did eventually return to occupy much of the land for a long time after the departure of Lyman and Rich.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 240; Jenson, "San Bernardino," 13, 18 April 1856; and Richard R. Hopkins to Amasa M. Lyman, 2 May 1856, Lyman Papers.

<sup>37</sup>Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, 1 November 1855, acknowledges mission call and makes request that he be permitted to move his families back to Utah; see also Arrington, *Charles C. Rich*, 202–6. Amasa M. Lyman to Brigham Young, December 1856, Lyman Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>38</sup>Hanks paid \$25,383 for his third interest in the ranch, along with apparently raising another \$10,000 among fellow northern California Church members (Arrington, *Charles C. Rich*, 202).

<sup>39</sup>Jenson, "San Bernardino," 23 March 1857.

<sup>40</sup>Hopkins to Amasa M. Lyman, 7 May 1857, Lyman Papers.

<sup>41</sup>Ebenezer Hanks to Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich, 7 August 1857, Lyman Papers.

<sup>42</sup>Hopkins to Amasa M. Lyman, 5 November 1857, Lyman Papers. The San Francisco *Daily Alta California*, 12 November 1857, reported, "arms and ammunition continue to be forwarded from San Bernardino [to Utah]." The report specifically mentions five hundred revolvers, powder, and duck for tents.

<sup>43</sup>*Daily Alta California*, 12, 14 October 1857. The Los Angeles *Star*, 9 May and 3, 10, 21 October 1857, listed at least three other alleged attacks on emigrants passing through Utah; for the recall to Utah, see Brigham Young to William Cox, 7 November 1857, Young Papers, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>44</sup>*Los Angeles Star*, 2, 9, 16, 30 November and 17, 20, 22 December 1856; 1 February 1857; Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, 7 February 1857, Young Papers.

<sup>45</sup>Boyle, Diary, 16, 17 November and 4 December 1857. Brigham Young was also inclined to describe the situation in terms of hell. In a June public address in Salt Lake City, referring to San Bernardino, he stated, "Hell reigns there, and . . . it is just as much as any 'Mormon' can do to live there, and that it is about time for him and every true Saint to leave that land" (*Deseret News*, 10 June 1857).

<sup>46</sup>Campbell, "History of the Church in California," 281.

<sup>47</sup>Jenson, "San Bernardino," 27 December 1856, population estimate citing *Western Standard*, a Mormon weekly published in northern California, apparently drawing on a report from the Los Angeles *Star*; Beattie, *Heritage of the Valley*, 311–14. Beattie cites several newspaper notices of Mormons who had answered the call to return to Utah but who had subsequently returned to San Bernardino (see Journal History, 10 May 1858, for Brigham Young virtually browbeating former San Bernardino stake president David Seeley into returning to California).

<sup>48</sup>After 1857–58, there was no organized branch of the Church in San Bernardino for more than a half-century. Agents of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints did establish a branch in the area. Campbell, *Establishing Zion*, has suggested an exodus of perhaps thousands from Utah in the 1850s—a subject that needs much further study.



# Capons

Across the weathered chopping block  
He laid his rough-skinned hand  
To measure where to kill,  
Then took the fowl, trussed it,  
Steadied the red-handled hatchet high  
And thundered down like demons  
One blurred master-stroke.

I watched  
Hunched behind the dirt-caked wheel  
Of the green John Deere.

He strung it from the clothesline  
Dripping like a cloth rag from a red-dye vat,  
Wings flapping as if determined to crash to earth.  
I thought of the time I fell off my bike  
And cried my way into the house streaming blood  
From a split chin, yellow shirt turning orange,  
But this was different. His head! His head!

Past the green pasture's fat grazing Herefords  
And the smelly pigpen with its Poland China boar,  
A proud Rhode Island Red strode cross the grass oblivious.

Too soon, his man's fist enclosing mine,  
Red handle in my palm,  
I closed my eyes in the heft of lift,  
The slash of death, and felt the hot blood  
Spattering our still-clasped hands.

—Jim Walker



# The Move South

Richard D. Poll

A legendary part of the Utah War of 1857–58 was the temporary abandonment of their homes by the Mormon people, an action that caught the attention of the world when “Johnston’s Army” marched through the desolate streets of Salt Lake City on 26 June 1858. Pioneer journals and memoirs, as well as popular and academic histories, tell of “the Move South,” but what actually happened, and why, has not been critically analyzed since Arrington looked at the economic dimensions of the move a generation ago.<sup>1</sup> This article is an attempt to do so; it is part of a larger review of the entire Utah War.<sup>2</sup>

These questions will be considered: Why was the Move South initiated? Why did it continue so long? How did it immediately impact the people involved? What were its consequences?

To seek refuge from danger in flight was no new idea for the Mormons in Utah in 1858. Until July of the previous year, none of them had spent ten years in one location since joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Thousands of European converts had fled from “Babylon” since 1847, and the rest of the Saints had experienced one or more of the involuntary retreats within Missouri, from Ohio to Missouri, from Missouri to Illinois, and from Illinois to the Great Basin. Inspired by millennial expectations, they saw the world as their enemy. Now the enemy was again threatening their homes—their Zion.

Defense, delay, and diplomacy were the policies adopted by Brigham Young and his colleagues in the Mormon leadership when the word first came that a United States force of 2,500 men was on its way to Utah Territory with a new territorial governor. Their initial response, “we ask no odds of them,”<sup>3</sup> expressed deep faith as well as bravado, but from the outset President Young weighed the odds. Another hegira was always available as an alternative to destruction. Even as he pursued a “scorched earth” policy to take advantage of the late departure of the army and called on John M. Bernhisel and Thomas L. Kane to seek the peaceful settlement that



ultimately came, the Mormon prophet-leader warned followers and foes that his people were prepared to take to their wagons once more.

The "Sebastopol policy" took its name from the 1855 Crimean War episode in which the Russians blew up their military stronghold in the Crimea before surrendering it to allied British and French forces. To the adult Mormons in Utah, most of whom had experienced rejection in England either as members or missionaries, the Russian action was an admirable precedent.<sup>4</sup> The possibility of comparable Mormon action was dramatically set forth in the public meeting that Captain Stewart Van Vliet attended on 13 September 1857. An assistant army quartermaster, Van Vliet was in Salt Lake City in an unsuccessful attempt to arrange provisions and accommodations for the troops en route, and the meeting in the old Tabernacle was arranged to convince him of the peril and folly of the government's policy. With hyperbolic rhetoric that probably reflected both conviction and calculation, President (and still Territorial Governor) Young declared:

Before I will suffer what I have in times gone by, there shall not be one building, nor one foot of lumber, nor a stick, nor a tree, nor a particle of grass and hay, that will burn, left in reach of our enemies. I am sworn, if driven to extremity, to utterly lay waste, in the name of Israel's God.<sup>5</sup>

To underscore the people's commitment, Apostle John Taylor said to the congregation, "All you that are willing to set fire to your property and lay it in ashes, rather than submit to their military rule and oppression, manifest it by raising your hands." No dissenting votes were cast.<sup>6</sup>

Evidence that the retreat option engaged Brigham Young's attention during the fall and early winter months is scattered through his sermons and letters and echoed in the journals and preaching of his followers. Then disappointing news and military prospects generated mid-February assignments to several stake leaders to select "some old men and boys" for exploring parties that would seek a haven in the wilderness south and west of the Mormon settlements.<sup>7</sup> Between March and June, expeditions headed by George W. Bean (Provo) and William H. Dame (Parowan) roamed through an expanse of the Great Basin astraddle the current Utah-Nevada boundary, about two hundred miles north-south and one hundred miles east-west, and even planted crops near present-day Panaca. But the 171 men of the White Mountain Expedition found nothing to match Brigham Young's impression of "room in that region for 500,000 persons to live scattered about where there is good grass and water."<sup>8</sup> By the time the expedition completed its



work, the events that gave rise to the Move South had come and gone.

Several factors precipitated the move. The first was that same geographic isolation that brought on the Utah War in the first place. During the winter, communications from Washington, D.C., and the East came by the monthly mail from southern California, weeks behind events and filtered through the hostile public opinion that the Mountain Meadows Massacre and other Utah events had fueled in the towns on the Pacific slope. Reports of President Buchanan's plans to double the size of the Utah Expedition were augmented by rumors of California volunteers invading from the West.

The second contributor to Mormon uneasiness was the bellicose atmosphere of those wintering near Fort Bridger at Camp Scott and Eckelsville, as reported by Nauvoo Legion spies and non-Mormon teamsters and military deserters who came to Salt Lake City. Albert Sidney Johnston's troops and Governor-designate Alfred Cumming's coterie of civil officials were perceived as waiting only for a break in the weather to advance with guns blazing. In January instructions were issued to bishops and stake presidents to raise and equip one thousand soldiers for a year's campaign, but the effort drew attention to the meager military resources available. Many congregations were being instructed in mid-March "to prepare for removal to the mountains."<sup>9</sup>

Deteriorating relations with the Indians were another complication. Subjected to inducements and pressures from both sides, the native Americans of northern Utah and southern Idaho were no longer reliable friends, or dependents, of the Mormons. An attack on Fort Limhi (the Salmon River Mission) prompted the dispatch of a military relief expedition from Salt Lake City and the mid-March abandonment of the mission. Federal Indian agents and mountain men sympathetic with the army were believed to be behind this and other depredations.

The hope of undermining the Buchanan war policy by generating public sympathy was another motive for the Sebastopol decision. As one Mormon leader noted at the time,

If we whip out and use up the few troops at Bridger will not the excitement and sympathy which is now raising in our favor in the states, be turned against us. Whereas if we only annoy and impede their progress while we 'Burn up' and flee, the folly, and meanness of the President will be more apparrant and he and his measures more unpopular.<sup>10</sup>

In view of the fact that reports of heavy Congressional and press criticism of the administration program reached Utah in increasing volume after 21 March 1858, it is arguable that the hope of turning



the American people against the President had even more to do with prolonging and justifying the exodus than with launching it.

The immediate cause of action was the prospect that Thomas L. Kane's peacemaking mission would fail. The eccentric "friend of the Mormons" brought unofficial peace overtures from the Buchanan administration, but his documents and deportment were so ambiguous as to produce some skepticism in Utah and even more at Camp Scott.<sup>11</sup> He reached Salt Lake City via Panama, San Francisco, and San Bernardino on 25 February and held a series of only partly reported meetings with President Young and others in the Mormon community. Having secured their reluctant consent to receive Cumming, provided the new governor came without army escort, Kane went to Camp Scott. He was accompanied most of the way by General William H. Kimball and a Nauvoo Legion guard. Between 12 and 19 March he managed to gain only a little of Cumming's confidence while totally alienating Johnston and the entire army.<sup>12</sup> As a result, his first report to Kimball, who had waited nearby until 17 March, was pessimistic; Kimball reached Salt Lake City with the message about forty-eight hours later.<sup>13</sup>

There is persuasive evidence that these tidings triggered Brigham Young's decision to implement the Sebastopol policy at once. A day earlier, 18 March, a meeting of Church leaders and Nauvoo Legion officers had discussed the tactical and public relations advantages of retreating if threatened, but according to Hosea Stout, who was there, "no definite measures" were adopted and "the council adjourned till 8th April."<sup>14</sup> Then on 21 March, without further council meetings—but certainly not without informal deliberations among colleagues who were at hand—President Young turned the regular meeting in the Tabernacle into a special conference that announced, adopted, and began to execute the contingency plans. Four days later, according to Samuel Pitchforth's diary, George Bean brought this report to Nephi, 150 miles to the south:

President Young has thought it wisdom to evacuate the Territory as far north as Provo, and that 500 families are going forthwith to the white mountains. this sudden move is on account of the news from the army Col T L Kane went out and came back to the boys. . . . [H]e told them that the soldiers had had fresh supplies and were determined to come. . . . Kane did not return with the brethren. so Pres. Young to save the effusion of blood has concluded to mov[e] and let them come in. I understand that the people are to move forthwith.<sup>15</sup>

That Sunday "Sebastopol" meeting was a long one, with Brigham Young speaking first and last and Heber C. Kimball, Daniel H. Wells, John Young, and Wilford Woodruff giving



reinforcing messages in between. After reminding the congregation that “the Lord has fought our battles,” that “I am your earthly shepherd,” and that “Our enemies are determined to blot us out of existence if they can,” President Young asked, “Should I take a course to waste life?” He then acknowledged the impracticality of fighting for their homes and declared, “I am in favor of leaving them before I am obliged to.” Then he confronted the inevitable question: “Where are you going? To the deserts and the mountains. There is a desert region in this Territory larger than any of the Eastern States, that no white man knows anything about. . . . I am going there where we should have gone six or seven years ago.”<sup>16</sup>

President Young announced his intention to begin moving his own families as soon as the snow was off the ground, but he proposed to call five hundred families to go immediately to put in crops. Others might go now if they wished, and everyone north of the Jordan River narrows between Salt Lake Valley and Utah Valley should prepare to go soon. “You may ask whether I am willing to burn up my houses? Yes, and to be the first man that will put a torch to my dwellings. . . . I am for letting them come and take ‘Sebastopol.’ ”

In his second address, the Mormon leader asked whether the congregation wanted him to decide who should go first, those who had already been driven from their homes at least once or those who had not. “You decide,” they shouted. He announced that “those who have never been pioneers shall be pioneers this time,” and he charged the bishops to select about five hundred families that very evening. He closed with a challenge: “Bishops and military officers, take due notice and govern yourselves accordingly; it is clear in the south.”<sup>17</sup>

That the evacuation was initially expected to be permanent—or at least extended—is suggested by the instructions that flowed out of Brigham Young’s office in the next two or three days, even though he had said on Sunday, “I would cache window and door frames and casings, etc., and thus save all that we can; we may come back here.” George Bean was asked to report on how many families could be accommodated as soon as he found a place in the western desert “suitable to stop for a season.” President Young wrote to John D. Lee, “It is at presant expected to make Headquarters at Parowan for a time, when we arrive there.”<sup>18</sup>

Since the prospects for a peaceful end to the conflict over the territorial governorship improved almost immediately, it is appropriate here to address the question, Why was the Sebastopol policy pursued with such vigor until the end of June?



On 28 March General Kimball returned from another meeting with Colonel Kane, bringing word that Cumming had agreed to come to Salt Lake City in spite of General Johnston's objections. Five days later, the California mail brought news that the Senate had defeated Buchanan's request for an increase in regular army strength, leading Hosea Stout to write, "the tide of feelings seemed to be turning in our favor."<sup>19</sup> On 12 April Cumming and Kane arrived, and the amiable new governor met no resistance in taking over his office and establishing a comfortable relationship with his predecessor. Meanwhile the army remained at Camp Scott, and in early June two peace commissioners came from Washington with amnesty terms that were not difficult for the Mormons to accept. Still the exodus continued, and the Sebastopol plan was not abandoned until after Johnston's army passed through Salt Lake City on 26 June and camped across the Jordan River.

It seems clear that an acute distrust of the army, fed by recurring reports of the climate at Camp Scott, was the primary motivation for the Mormon course. Both Kane and Cumming repeatedly urged that the dislocating relocation be abandoned, assuring Young that the troops would not move until the governor approved their coming. But Brigham Young clung to the hope that somehow the troops could be kept out altogether. Just before Cumming left for Camp Scott on 12 May to bring back his wife and the other federal officials, Young declared: "[I]f the troops were withdrawn from the Territory, the people would stop moving; but . . . ninety-nine out of every hundred of this people would rather live out their lives in the mountains than endure the oppression the Federal Government was now heaping upon them."<sup>20</sup>

When it became clear that the establishment of a U.S. Army post in Utah Territory was inevitable, President Young persisted in his course. Perhaps he feared that Cumming would be unable fully to control the military—a concern that subsequent events showed to be well founded. Perhaps he saw Cumming's and Kane's reaction to the exodus as support for the hope that a people in flight for conscience's sake would generate sympathy outside Utah. Perhaps, as Colonel Kane apparently suspected, Brigham Young was afraid of the embarrassment of a possibly premature reversal of policy. Kane wrote privately, "The effect of his changing his position for the third time would have been to discredit entirely his extraordinary pretensions as one receiving revelations from the Most High."<sup>21</sup>

That the unpredictable and uncontrollable course of the Utah War had by March 1858 shaken Brigham Young's confidence he acknowledged in his Tabernacle message: "do not come to my



office to ask me whether I am mistaken, for I want to tell you now, perhaps I am.”<sup>22</sup> Still, he made adjustments in the overall relocation plan as soon as the odds on its being temporary improved. References to a new Church headquarters in southern Utah disappeared from his correspondence. The tempo of the movement slowed, and few families went farther south than Utah County. The *Deseret News* never moved beyond Fillmore, and other Church agencies and offices congregated in Provo. When President Young and some of his associates began buying property in Provo, it was presumptive evidence that by 23 April no further movement was anticipated. It probably also showed his uncertainty about how long the Church headquarters might remain in Provo.<sup>23</sup>

The Move South was organized on the same principles that had guided the pioneer treks to the Great Basin and the colonizing projects of the previous decade: ecclesiastical leadership and cooperative sharing of resources and tasks. There can be no doubt that Brigham Young was the prime mover, first to last. Isaiah Coombs, who returned from England to join the exodus, wrote, “Israel, in her balmy days, was never so obedient to Moses as we are to Brigham.”<sup>24</sup> A pamphlet containing President Young’s Tabernacle instructions appeared almost immediately and was distributed to local Church leaders; John D. Lee received a copy on 30 March at Washington, Utah, three hundred miles south of Salt Lake City.<sup>25</sup> Directions, verbal and by letter, poured from his office, with additional detailed instructions coming from Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter.<sup>26</sup> General Daniel H. Wells, Young’s second counselor, directed aspects that involved the Nauvoo Legion; Heber C. Kimball, Young’s first counselor and closest friend, and the other Apostles in Utah participated in decision-making councils and handled important tasks that were assigned to them. At a 24 March meeting of leaders of the Salt Lake and nearby wards, Bishop Hunter gave several instructions; other communities received them by courier before the end of the week. Each congregation (ward or branch) north of Utah Valley was assigned a provisional destination in Utah, Juab, Millard, or Iron counties. For the Fourteenth Ward it was Round Valley (near Fillmore), and for Big Cottonwood Ward it was Beaver Valley. Bishops were advised on how to select and organize the first moving groups. Pointers were given on flouring grain and saving supplies; excess freighting capacity was to be made available for other aspects of the move, including hauling grain on shares. After some indecision about what to do with supplies contributed earlier for the “standing army,” most of them were returned to the donors or their wards to assist the migration.<sup>27</sup>



To insure that military manpower resources would not be depleted, a thousand men were requisitioned to maintain patrols in Echo Canyon and protect property in the abandoned settlements. The contingents eventually assigned to Great Salt Lake and Weber counties were three hundred each; other areas received the balance. Soldiers were expected to relocate their families, and breaks in military service were permitted so that men could assist in these moves. They were also instructed to try to protect property and crops against animal and human depredations, and to be prepared to apply the torch if President Young gave the word.<sup>28</sup>

The people of Utah Stake, in Utah Valley, were sent three assignments. The first, to remain prepared to execute the Sebastopol policy, led to much grinding and packing of flour and some other preparations to move. These soon faded from attention, however, under the pressures generated by the other two assignments. The people were asked to provide wagon power for the movement from Salt Lake Valley and to make housing, land, and other help available for as many of the migrants as could be accommodated—for a stay whose duration was by no means clear.

To the communities south of Utah Valley went similar instructions, plus advice to strengthen the White Mountain Mission and to plant extra grain for an expanding population. The most urgent request was for wagons and provisions to assist the exodus. Within two weeks, caravans were moving north from the settlements in Sanpete Valley and from Washington, Harmony, Cedar City, Parowan, and intermediate points along the California Trail. By the time most of this volunteer help reached Salt Lake City, there was little impetus to move people all the way to southern Utah, but they did help to haul some people and goods as far south as Nephi and Fillmore.

The northern communities—Box Elder (Brigham City), Ogden, and the dozen small settlements along the road that linked them to Salt Lake City—were instructed to prepare for a two- or three-stage movement. The northernmost families would move into Ogden; then as housing was vacated in the Salt Lake wards, all would move that far, then go on to destinations farther south. For example, the North Cottonwood Ward (Farmington) was assigned to the Salt Lake Nineteenth Ward, then on to a location to be designated later.<sup>29</sup> These transient wards were counseled that during their Salt Lake Valley stopover they should not damage fences or fruit trees, and they should pasture cattle west of the Jordan.<sup>30</sup> Few of the northern Utah residents went farther than Utah County, and a small number apparently never left home. The Saints in the Tooele area, southwest of Great Salt Lake, were sent directly



to Utah Valley, and Indian unrest provided an additional incentive for them to go.<sup>31</sup>

Because the initial round of instructions to all Church units gives the impression of a movement planned with almost military precision, historical accounts of the Move South have credited the event itself with a greater measure of direction and control than was actually the case.<sup>32</sup> The de facto abandonment of the idea of a permanent relocation in some distant refuge was gradual and unattended by a systematic revision of instructions to participants in the move. Consequently, bishops who still attended portions of their congregations did a good deal of improvising as well as independent negotiating with their counterparts in the central Utah communities. As for those who moved independently, what happened to them was more a function of ingenuity, luck, and family ties than of any overarching logistical plan. Still, all were participants in a massive effort, and through the same process of historical mythmaking that would transform the hand-cart tragedies of 1856, the Move South became, for many of the participants, a monumental Church accomplishment as well as a witness of faith.

The exodus began quickly once the Sebastopol policy was adopted. Some bishops went straight from the Tabernacle meeting on 21 March to the task of calling their people together, and by evening the first selections were made for the honor of leading the way. Other wards soon followed suit, designating up to fifty families to be part of the vanguard of five hundred. That all the Saints were not thrilled by the prospect is apparent from Hosea Stout's experience: "The brethren seemed some what loth to volunteer for which reason I gave my name to go in the first Company although I did not come in that class who were called upon."<sup>33</sup>

Snowy weather hampered preparations the first week, but companies were organized and reckonings of resources were made. The North Cottonwood Ward counted 757 members, 117 of them under four years old. Available to move the 144 families and sustain them in a temporary location were 82 wagons and 133 teams (96 yoke of oxen and 95 horses). Food supplies included 307 cows, 94 "two year old & upwards," 6,496 bushels of wheat, and 27,517 pounds of flour. It figured out at 260 pounds of flour per person "after deducting one bushel for seed" for each family.<sup>34</sup> Not all congregations were so well equipped.

In every ward were individuals who fell into the needy category. A letter that later appeared in the *Millennial Star* gives the impressions of one faithful woman:



Go where you will, you will see the Saints making cheerful preparations for their departure, and a word of comfort on their lips for their neighbors; notwithstanding which, a keen observer might perceive a tear glistening in the eye of some of the stoutest among us. We have enough to eat, and for that we are thankful. Our clothing is nearly all worn out, and it is not possible to buy any more here. If we had heeded the counsel of Brother Brigham a little sooner, we should now have an abundance of clothing; but we are like children—we have to learn by experience. . . . [F]ortunately for me, I have now no mirror, and therefore, my own appearance does not annoy me much.<sup>35</sup>

Some of the volunteer drayage capacity from the south was used to move the indigent and insufficiently equipped households. One participating wagoner remembers going several times to the General Tithing Office, “where the brethren in charge gave us a load of people and their belongings, which we brought to Utah County and left in whatever town they wished to stop.”<sup>36</sup> To provide for four such families that were going first, the bishop of the Fourteenth Ward asked that the regular 1 April fast day offerings be expanded to represent “a two Days fast so as to help the poor.”<sup>37</sup> Women who lacked male help because of military, missionary, or other reasons were a special concern of the bishops; when the hundred men who had been proselyting in Europe reached Utah in May and June, most of them found their families already relocated.

Under the strictest admonition to preserve breadstuffs, the Saints from Brigham City to the Point of the Mountain converted their wheat to flour, boxed and barreled it, and took it south. Andrew Gardner’s Big Cottonwood mill, strategically situated on the State Road south of Salt Lake City, ground an estimated half million pounds of flour, or 250 one-ton wagonloads, during the months the exodus was in progress. The Church Tithing Office granary also shipped about three hundred wagonloads of wheat and flour to Provo, along with a large bin to hold it.<sup>38</sup>

Relocating the Church headquarters was a task that extended into May. Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, and others spent days packing and moving the books, records, and secretarial equipment in the Church offices to temporary locations in Provo.<sup>39</sup> The *Deseret News* prepared to move to Fillmore and then to Parowan. The foundation and cut stones on the temple grounds were buried, along with the heaviest equipment of the public works shops and the window casings from the Tabernacle, in a “serpentine cache” designed to protect them from intruders. But the organ and most of the public-works tools went with the wagonloads of Church property that constituted a substantial part of what moved south.<sup>40</sup>



Brigham Young and other leaders began moving their families south on 1 April. Young had alerted the Provo leadership with a partly facetious letter whose impact can only be surmised:

Dear Brother [Bishop Elias H. Blackburn]—I design to soon begin to move my family, provisions, stoves, musical instruments, and such other articles as may be needed and cannot be saved in caches, as far as Provo, and I would like to have you secure me one or two large halls in your city in which I can shelter my family, and some store rooms for my property. You may wish to know how much room I may need; from ten feet square to half of your city, I am not particular. “How many are you going to move to this place?” you may ask; only a few, all who live in this city. You will understand that we shall need many teams and wagons for this movement, probably not over 2000 at first, and we expect you to assist us in this matter as much as you can consistently, beginning as soon as you can after next Sunday the 29th. As we shall not sow nor plant any more here this season, you will understand the propriety of raising all the potatoes, flax and sugar cane you may be able to.<sup>41</sup>

Within the twenty Salt Lake City, seven rural Salt Lake County, and about ten other northern Utah wards and branches that were called upon to move, the nature and extent of coordinated planning and group movement depended upon local leadership and circumstances. Ward records suggest that most congregations went through the organizing phase, after which the degree of cooperation and priesthood supervision in the implementation of plans varied widely. Since no ward has left systematic records for the exodus period, generalizations must be tentative, but it appears that many ceased to function *as wards* as soon as members began to leave. On the other hand, some congregations went all the way. On 23 April President Young visited the encampments of the Nineteenth, Bountiful, and other wards along the lower Provo River, in an area called “Shanghai.” Centerville Ward went to Spanish Fork, where they “located temporarily on the Indian Reservation.” Big Cottonwood Ward, in southeastern Salt Lake County, decided in March to send an advance party of thirty wagons to locate sites in Beaver Valley, its assigned destination; however, when the general move took place in April most of the ward members settled in the bottomland north of the Provo River, where they remained under a reorganized bishopric until they returned home.<sup>42</sup>

Since the concept of a permanent move into the western desert was tacitly abandoned—or at least reconverted to the contingency plan that it had been before 21 March, before most of the Mormons actually left their homes—where they actually went became a function of who they were. The LDS General Authorities and their chief aides went to Provo, where heroic efforts were made to



accommodate them. People with close kin in the communities south of the evacuation zone had the option of moving in or camping on family lands; some who went farthest south were in this category. Those with migrating ward groups lived like pioneers again, in tents and wagons, until other shelter could be built. Of the large number who moved as individual family units, some found accommodation with the residents of Utah County and points beyond, who were under strong admonition from Brigham Young to extend hospitality; among those who found temporary homes with strangers, Margaret Simmons remembers the Joseph Curtis family of Payson, her hosts at the time her baby sister was born.<sup>43</sup> Others stopped on lands made available by local authorities, there to live in wagon boxes, tents, dugouts, wickiups, barns, and log cabins. Polygamous and large monogamous families were often moved serially, with menfolk and rolling stock shuttling back and forth between. Peregrine Sessions took a first load of flour to American Fork on 31 March and moved his family in April, while his mother, Patty Sessions Parry, put in a garden and did several nursing tasks before joining him there on 25 May.<sup>44</sup> Not all such families found temporary homes in a single location.

The initial instructions to discontinue planting caught the northern Utah Saints already into the planting cycle, and it does not appear that everyone stopped immediately. One of the assignments to men left behind as property guardians was to irrigate growing crops; some of the late departees also tended their neighbors' fields in the interim, as did some of the temporary Salt Lake City residents who came from communities farther north. Many men with families temporarily in the south also traveled back to their homes to weed gardens, take water turns, and mend fences. This back-and-forth activity is additional evidence that rank-and-file Mormons soon perceived the Move South as a temporary expedient.

Still, most people moved, taking their livestock and as much as possible of their movable property with them. The route of migration was along the single dirt road that linked the Mormon settlements from Brigham City to Nephi. Whether the spring weather was rainy or dry, the trip was no picnic. Wilford Woodruff remarked on the women and children "stuck in the mud between here and Provo."<sup>45</sup> A volunteer teamster recorded that snow caught him en route back to Nephi with a Salt Lake family, and "if we had not pulled down a fence to burn we must of Perrished."<sup>46</sup> A young woman who made the trek in dry weather later remarked on the aptness of one of the southern Salt Lake County communities taking the name Sandy.<sup>47</sup>



Bishop Edwin D. Woolley's story illustrates the multiple dimensions of the move. Ward teachers found that in the Thirteenth Ward 145 families, numbering 932 persons, wanted to move quickly, yet twenty-four households lacked wagons. While supervising arrangements for the poor, Woolley also moved his four wives and their families to Provo, where some of the children camped in tents for the duration. He remained in Salt Lake City, looking after a grandmother who was too ill to move, assisting family members who were with the militia, and conducting business in the Church tithing store.<sup>48</sup>

With the emigration went most, but not all, of the business activity in Great Salt Lake Valley. Most of the non-Mormon component had already disappeared when the Gentile merchants left for California or the East in the fall of 1857. Individual craftsmen took their tools with them. Andrew Gardner left Big Cottonwood to set up a sawmill and a gristmill in Spanish Fork, leaving Warren Foote to make flour at the old mill while the traffic lasted. Frederick Kesler dismantled his mill in Box Elder and got it going in Utah County just in time to receive instructions to take it back to Box Elder again. David Candland, who had relocated in American Fork with his families (including a plural wife married in April), was instructed to go back to Salt Lake City in May and reopen the Globe Hotel. With cash and provisions provided by the Church, he entertained such notables as the U.S. peace commissioners and the land agents who came to try to sell real estate in Central America to Brigham Young. Of the Church-owned enterprises, only an inventory-shrunk tithing store remained open to supply the needs of the militia.<sup>49</sup>

U.S. money being virtually unavailable in Utah, goods and services were paid for with Deseret currency, tithing scrip, and barter arrangements. The move, of course, disrupted both the payment of tithes and the machinery for managing it. The Church-sponsored currency, secured in part by livestock, was increased by almost forty thousand dollars during the move, and in spite of some resistance it circulated at par until the people returned and Gentile commerce reappeared.<sup>50</sup>

In the absence of any systematic tabulation of the number of participants in the Move South, contemporary estimates of thirty thousand seem accurate—ten thousand from outside Salt Lake and twenty thousand from the city itself. Given a territorial population in 1860 of only 40,273, and excluding the people who in 1858 lived in central and southern Utah and the militia and nonmovers who remained in the north, Arrington's recent estimate of thirty-five thousand seems high.<sup>51</sup> Whatever the number, it was an impressive



phenomenon to both trekkers and observers, Mormon and Gentile. Up to eight hundred wagons a day were on the road between Salt Lake City and Utah County in April and May. To one observer who saw teams scattered from "the city to San Peet," it was "like one train."<sup>52</sup>

In spite of the trials, most of the migrants maintained confidence in the plan and in the counsel of their leaders. Because of his unique situation, William Staines is a noteworthy example. While entertaining Thomas Kane and later Governor and Mrs. Cumming in his comfortable home (later the Devereaux House), Staines moved his family to Payson and repeatedly expressed willingness to burn house, furniture, and prize-winning orchard if necessary. "I feell as tho I would rather have a Sage Bush for my house and enjoy my religion than be in my good Home and see Israels Daughters defiled which I am afraid some would be if those Troops were in our midst."<sup>53</sup> Such testimonies and such fears abound in the diaries and records of the move.

That some of the migrants were less enthusiastic has already been suggested. According to one historian, many "did not recognize the social significance of the move, and procrastinated in their departure," and President Young "threatened condign punishment on those who did not comply." The peace commissioners who traveled to Provo later reported that "at least one-third of the persons who had removed from their homes were compelled to do so."<sup>54</sup> This estimate may be high even if social pressure is defined as compulsion.

How many of the Saints elected not to participate is uncertain. Ecclesiastical warnings against grumbling and apostates were numerous enough to suggest problems, as do a few accounts of Nauvoo Legion interceptions of people trying to escape to Camp Scott. How many Church members defected is now impossible to determine; the fifty-six men, thirty-three women, and seventy-one children who accepted Governor Cumming's 24 April offer of safe conduct to Camp Scott may have included non-Mormons as well as disaffected Saints.<sup>55</sup> Late in May a Church count found 2,400 people in Salt Lake City, one thousand of whom had moved in from northern Utah. As late as 13 June, when the peace commissioners were meeting with President Young and Governor Cumming, Robert Burton was urging people to leave. So was Bishop Harker of West Jordan, who found some families "very loaffull [loath] to leave." Arrington estimates that approximately fifteen hundred people remained in the northern settlements when the army came. Some had military assignments to protect or destroy property, some were waiting under Governor Cumming's protection, some were



resisting or procrastinating, and some, like Grandmother Louisa Egbert in Kaysville, were still "awaiting word to come at any time."<sup>56</sup>

In the spring of 1858, temporary settlements appeared at Lehi (still referred to in some of the accounts as Dry Creek), nearby Alpine (Mountainville), American Fork (Lake City), Pleasant Grove (Battle Creek), Provo, Springville, Mapleton (Hobble Creek), Spanish Fork, Salem (Pondtown), Payson (Peteetneet), Santaquin (Summit Creek), and Nephi (Salt Creek). As the influx of humans and animals overtaxed the camps and pasture lands initially allocated by the local wards, some relocations took place; most of the West Jordan Ward (southwest Salt Lake County) members moved to Pondtown (Salem) and Spanish Fork and then relocated on the shore of Utah Lake between Spanish Fork River and Peteetneet Creek, taking their newly built schoolhouse with them.<sup>57</sup> Migrants who made it as far as Nephi were offered lots to build or camp on and were urged by Bishop J. G. Bigler: "make your settlement as comfortable as circumstances will allow."<sup>58</sup> Individual families who went beyond to such settlements as Fillmore, Parowan, Cedar City, Manti, and Ephraim generally were accommodated in existing structures; their number was not large enough to affect the communities as those in Utah County were impacted.

Births, deaths, marriages, and divorces were not suspended by the exodus.<sup>59</sup> The northern Utah postmasters even made an effort to forward mail when the whereabouts of addressees were known.<sup>60</sup> The early transformation of the exodus to a "wait and see" enterprise meant the resumption of many subsistence and market activities. Gardens were planted and some grain was sown in vacant town lots and rural pastures. Some lands were rented and even purchased, but most were made available without charge. A major issue between residents and newcomers was the control of livestock; damage to fences and gardens was a chronic problem that bishops and other Church leaders had to deal with. Pasture lands were overgrazed, and timber cutting depleted stocks of trees in bottomlands and nearby canyons at an unprecedented rate.

Beyond the initial effort by the Presiding Bishopric to assign migrating wards to particular locations, no overall plan for allocating resources and meeting individual hardships appears to have been developed. Although many poor families were helped to equip and provision for the journey, spontaneous sharing and ingenuity took care of special needs thereafter. An assigned wagon moved John Powell's family to Springville, but when he could find no work there, he walked to Fillmore, borrowed a wagon, and came



back to move his family on to the territorial capital.<sup>61</sup> Since most of the participants were away from home only two or three months, no socioeconomic segregation into pockets of poverty or affluence occurred; the standard of living was meager for almost everyone. For the women, homemaking was particularly tedious and taxing; most of them had experienced enough of wagon-box living while crossing the plains.

In varying degrees the temporary residents participated in the activities of the nearest communities. Some found employment in shops, mills, and fields. Some attended the meetings of the local congregations; by the end of May it was necessary to enlarge Provo's Bowery to accommodate the Sunday crowds. Whether men who had been excused from military service were under orders to drill with accessible Nauvoo Legion units is not clear; Lorenzo Brown trained with the militia in Nephi and was elected a unit captain.<sup>62</sup>

Millers, blacksmiths, and other craftsmen set up shop in shanties on Provo square and elsewhere in Utah Valley. While some skills were idled by the move, Esaias Edwards took his tools to Provo, rented a waterpower lathe, made spinning wheels, and "did tolerably well." George W. Brimhall caught and sold Utah Lake fish. Carpenters and other builders had plenty of work, of course. Temporary Church public-works mills and shops were set up in several central and southern Utah locations to grind flour, repair equipment, manufacture war materials, and provide other public services. The public-works program employed several hundred men to build a fourteen-mile toll road up Provo Canyon into Heber Valley; John Cook remembered being paid for his surveying labor with twenty-five acres of land and ten dollars cash.<sup>63</sup> The *Deseret News* published a weekly four-page issue in Fillmore between 5 May and 25 August, featuring Church material and Utah news; the monthly mail from California was its chief source of outside information.

Provo was a beehive and a madhouse during the Move South. The population of today's Provo-Orem area went from about four thousand to twelve thousand, or possibly even fifteen thousand. As available structures were filled to capacity, many new shelters were built with lumber brought from evacuated towns, and temporary shelters of all kinds lined both banks of Provo River from Utah Lake to the mouth of Provo Canyon. Stake President James C. Snow, energetic and occasionally profane, headed the Saints in Utah County. Bishop Blackburn was the senior bishop, and on him apparently fell the primary responsibility of transforming instructions from Salt Lake City into local actions. The dimensions of that



task were suggested in Brigham Young's 24 March letter, quoted above. On 28 March Bishop Blackburn read the letter in meeting and asked for thirty wagons to start north two days later. The same meeting unanimously passed President Snow's motion "that the Bishops put all loafers to hard labor."<sup>64</sup>

As the *de facto* center of Mormondom, Provo filled up with Church officials and activities. President Young, who officed in the barely finished seminary building and divided his time between Provo and Salt Lake City, was clearly in charge when he was in town. The Church Historian's Office journal for 22–23 April reports he inspected the thousand-acre Church pasture at the mouth of the Provo River and selected land for a storage yard, where a number of "shanties" were soon constructed, one 150 feet long. He also paid President Snow a thousand dollars for a house and two lots and announced his determination to move his family from Salt Lake the following week because "the people were waiting to see if he would move." On 30 April he arrived with twenty-two wagons filled with family and goods and "called on Bishop Blackburn to furnish him with four houses, for some family, which he did."<sup>65</sup>

Heber C. Kimball told a large congregation on 2 May, "We calculate to improve this City. . . . [W]e are coming here to enrich you & not to have you lounging in the Streets. . . . [W]e shall raise good crops this year & next year if we sow it." At the same meeting Brigham Young indicated he was still uncertain about the future: "What will be the result of this move I cant tell—but leave the event with God. . . . If we leave here to go South you will go with us."<sup>66</sup>

The Church Historian's Office staff set up shop in the Provo Music Hall, where the Church records, and probably the Tabernacle organ, were stored. The hundreds of boxes of tithing flour were moved onto the square where the courthouse now stands; they were protected by a "marquee" that was part wood and part tent. Lorin Farr's is the best-known description of how Provo looked in mid-1858:

Accommodations of the crudest kind were all that Provo could offer. All were crowded into the settlers' homes who could be, and every assistance given those forced to camp out. Temporary houses were built by the Church on the public square. The north side was full while on the west the buildings ran half-way down. They were built close together like a fort, some of them to store grain in. Brigham occupied several of them. In the center of the block was a large marquee tent for a storehouse. As summer ripened the weather became unbearably hot. The water was bad, as we had to dig holes to get water, and the people began to complain of sickness. The feed had also been eaten off by the cattle, our cows dried up, flies were very bad tormenting our cattle, and it was with great difficulty that we controlled our stock from running off.<sup>67</sup>



Although Governor Cumming was unable to persuade Brigham Young to abandon the Move South, it is probable that his pledges of goodwill, his amiable relations with the Mormon leader, and his movements around the northern part of the territory with Thomas Kane had two effects. They increased the reluctance to move on the part of some who were still in place in May, and they led many of the migrants to think of going home. In early June the First Presidency was credited with intimating "that we should not leave these vallies."<sup>68</sup> The arrival of Buchanan's commissioners in Provo on 16 June, three days after negotiating a peace treaty in Salt Lake City, increased these pressures. Still, Brigham Young's distrust of the army was sufficiently widely shared that his "wait and see" advice was still followed by almost everyone.

Not until Johnston's forces, moving in defiance of what Cumming understood was an agreement between himself and the general, passed through Salt Lake City on 26 June and camped west of Jordan River did President Young observe, "The Clouds seem to be breaking away." "When we git the news good & solid we will go home," the Mormon leader told the Provo congregation on 27 June, and William C. Dunbar sang the same hymn that he had earlier sung, in a small gesture of defiance, at Young's meeting with the United States commissioners two weeks earlier:

O Zion! dear Zion! home of the free:  
In thy temples we'll bend,  
All thy rights we'll defend  
And our home shall be ever with thee.

The federal troops were still in place near the Jordan Narrows when President Young announced on 30 June that he was going home and the Saints were at liberty to follow.<sup>69</sup>

The return was largely an uncoordinated movement of individual households, spanning July and part of August. It was launched without fanfare, but word of mouth soon alerted the camps of the displaced. The first units of the Young family and other leadership households left Provo in carriages on the evening of 30 June, traveling overnight to avoid the heat and worst dust of a summer journey on the State Road. Governor Cumming traveled with them. By early morning on 2 July, the barricades were down from the Lion House and the Church office, and a reporter with the army noted "that the female population of the city had been considerably augmented within twenty-four hours." Thereafter President Young went into semiseclusion for most of July, his health overtaxed by the strain of recent events.<sup>70</sup>



The shortage of wagons meant that some folks' return was delayed; some large families came back in installments. Driving his herd of pigs south had so taxed Henry Ballard's patience that he "loaded them up in the wagon and took them home first."<sup>71</sup> It appears that several hundred people, like John Powell and miller Archibald Gardner, elected to stay and make a new start in central Utah. Mary Ann Weston Maughan, one of the pioneers of Cache Valley, followed counsel not to go all the way home in 1858; her family wintered in Salt Lake City in a house provided by Bishop Hunter, and the Indians apparently got the fifteen thousand bushels of wheat that had been left in the north.<sup>72</sup> The return was poignantly described by Martin Luther Ensign, a Brigham City missionary to England who reached Salt Lake just in time to go looking for his family:

I found my Famely at Pacon [Payson] 120 miles from home on the 22nd June all well. In a seller belonging to Robert Snider . . . I found the Girls 3 of them Mother had come North to meet me & mised me She came back and we met in the Seller Orders came from Brigham Young about the first of July to return home & OH what Joyful news all began to make ready . . . started for home on July 4th We met the Army on 6th in the narows of the Jordon River and were Delade for a half day because we could not pass them on the dugway. It was very hot & we Suffered for water for our selves & teems continued our Journey in the Afternoon Arived at our home in Brigham City July 10th 1858 All was desolate, the doors & floors overhead & board fences were, All taken to make Boxes to hold flowr & other things in the move, Meny not expecting to return so all was free to all. . . . God had blessed us while I was gorn.<sup>73</sup>

An irony of the return, noted many observers, was "the singular spectacle . . . of an army going in one direction and the populace which had fled from it, moving by its side in the opposite direction without fear and in complete amity."<sup>74</sup>

What were the consequences of the Move South? It did not materially affect the outcome of the Utah War, which changed Utah Territory in several ways. It installed a Gentile governor and ended Mormon control over many of the instrumentalities of territorial government.<sup>75</sup> It introduced the military presence at Camp Floyd, with substantial economic and moral consequences. It generated an economic boom and serious social problems for Provo and the rest of Utah County. It frustrated Brigham Young's dream of a self-sufficient, self-contained, and self-governing Mormon commonwealth in the Great Basin.

The Move South generated some favorable newspaper and Congressional comment about the sacrificial solidarity of the Latter-day Saints. Some of the statements were politically



motivated, as this from the *New York Tribune* of 8 May: "The driving of the Mormons from their homes, by military terror, will hardly contribute much to the honor of the country, or to the posthumous reputation of Mr. Buchanan's presidency." Most of the sympathy was condescending, as this *London Times* dispatch of 5 July: "These Western peasants seem to be a nation of heroes, ready to sacrifice everything rather than surrender one of their wives or a letter from Joe Smith's golden plates." Since the hegira had no appreciable effect on the Utah policies of the United States government, however, Neff's judgment, "The master strategy of President-Governor Young had achieved its reward," must be discounted.<sup>76</sup>

The Move South certainly gave many people opportunity for charitable service, and it probably strengthened the religious commitments of some of the participants, both movers and helpers. However, it is apparent that most of the consequences were negative. The move was costly to participants, whose abandoned homes and fields deteriorated and whose energies were used up in the sheer efforts of relocating and surviving. Scarce capital was expended; Frederick Kesler estimated that moving his mill from Brigham City to Provo and back cost a thousand dollars. The Church public works, relocated in Salt Lake City, never regained their momentum, several ward buildings remained half-finished for many months, and most agricultural and manufacturing plans were disrupted. Construction on the temple was slow getting started again.<sup>77</sup> Certainly the expenditure of manpower and capital goods was comparable to what went into the Iron Mission and the Brigham Young Express and Carrying Company.

The intangible costs were high. Ward organizations were disrupted. Some wards held no meetings after the moving started, few held together during the move, and some required reorganization of bishoprics after the return. No ward meetings were held in Salt Lake City until late in August 1858, and by instructions from the First Presidency, ward meetings throughout most of Utah were held only on an as-needed basis until late in the year.<sup>78</sup> The first entry in the Salt Lake Eighth Ward minutes is for 10 October, while only bishop's courts were recorded in the Fifteenth Ward before 19 December. On 3 October the Fourteenth Ward bishop instructed the home teachers to see that all grain tithing be paid, noting that "four months of our tything is thrown off."<sup>79</sup> The old Salt Lake Tabernacle was not put back into use for public religious services until 1859.<sup>80</sup> The several ward Relief Societies and Sunday Schools that had been organized earlier stopped functioning, and the Relief Society movement did not revive until a decade later.<sup>81</sup>



The revivalist enthusiasm generated by the Reformation of 1856–57 was almost totally dissipated, partly by the move and partly by the disillusioning outcome of the Utah War as a whole. Even in remote and relatively unaffected Sanpete Valley, a bishop remarked in July on the pervasive “gloom.” Apostates are lamented in several ward records; Nephi witnessed a number of Mormons traveling to California, and the stress within the community prompted the bishop to urge people not to say bitter things to those “who were going away but have now concluded to stay.” In Beaver many of the people who had been called in from San Bernardino “wished to returen.”<sup>82</sup> Brigham Young himself experienced a discernible loss of vigor and self-confidence before the war had run its course.<sup>83</sup>

The Latter-day Saints, leaders and followers, who confronted Johnston’s army in the early months of the Utah War were inured to persecution and hardships by religious convictions and millennial expectations. Their commitments to Kingdom building led almost all of them to respond to the Sebastopol call. But in the end they were disheartened by the outcome of the tragic-comic events of 1857–58. In Arrington’s words, “It was clear that a decade and more of achievement and social independence, in the face of hostile nature and hostile humanity, had ended in poverty and disappointment.”<sup>84</sup> The homes to which the Mormons returned after the Move South were inescapably “in the world,” although a generation would pass before they and their heirs—leaders and followers—would come to terms with that bitter fact.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), 182–94.

<sup>2</sup>Norman F. Furniss, *The Mormon Conflict* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), is an informative treatment of most aspects of the Utah War. A dissertation originally published in 1960 by Yale University Press, it is generally unsympathetic toward Brigham Young, Thomas L. Kane, and the Mormon side of the conflict.

<sup>3</sup>Brigham Young, 13 September 1857, recalling a remark made when news of the army’s coming was received on 24 July, *Journal of Discourses* 5:233.

<sup>4</sup>Clifford Stott, *Search for Sanctuary: Brigham Young and the White Mountain Expedition* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1984), 24–30, 49–65.

<sup>5</sup>*Journal of Discourses* 5:232.

<sup>6</sup>*Deseret News*, 23 September 1857. Van Vliet was sufficiently impressed to recommend that the army and the government seek a peaceful settlement with the Mormons (*House Executive Documents*, 35th Cong., 1st sess., x, no. 71, 24–27, and *Senate Documents*, 35th Cong., 1st sess., 3:37–38).

<sup>7</sup>Stott, *Search for Sanctuary*, 49. Stott provides excellent maps and a list of the participants, as well as a detailed account of these activities.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 107, quoting from Brigham Young, *A Series of Instructions and Remarks by President Brigham Young at a Special Conference, Tabernacle, 21 March 1858*, reported by George D. Watt (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1858).



<sup>9</sup>Salt Lake Twentieth Ward Minutes, 17 March 1858; Salt Lake Fourteenth Ward Minutes, 17 March 1858, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives). Unless otherwise noted, manuscript sources cited in this paper are in the LDS Church Archives. Usually microfilms or typescripts of the manuscripts were consulted.

<sup>10</sup>Juanita Brooks, ed., *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, Utah State Historical Society, 1964), 2:654.

<sup>11</sup>Richard D. Poll, *Quixotic Mediator: Thomas L. Kane and the Utah War*, Dello G. Dayton Memorial Lecture, 25 April 1984 (Ogden: Weber State College Press, 1985), 1–31, is the fullest account of Kane's role.

<sup>12</sup>Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 175–82.

<sup>13</sup>Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 2:654. The pessimism is further expressed in Kane to Cumming, 19 March 1858, Alfred Cumming Papers, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

<sup>14</sup>Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 2:655. Stott, *Search for Sanctuary*, 82–96, believes that the Sebastopol decision was made before this meeting, discounting Stout's report and apparently crediting Young with concluding that Kane's mission would fail even before receiving any report from Camp Scott.

<sup>15</sup>Samuel Pitchforth, Diary, 1857–61, 25 March 1858. Young reported Kimball's return and asked Kane's opinion of the new policy. Colonel Kane concluded that Young's decision was prompted by the expectation of even more disappointing news in the next report from Camp Scott (Young to Kane, 22 March 1858, and Kane to Judge John K. Kane, 4 April 1858, Kane Collection, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo).

<sup>16</sup>Stott, *Search for Sanctuary*, 57.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 56–60.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 58; Young to Bean, 21 March 1858, Brigham Young Letterbooks; Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848–1876*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1983), 1:156. Parowan is about 250 miles south of Salt Lake City.

<sup>19</sup>Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 2:656.

<sup>20</sup>Historian's Office Journal, 12, 24, and 30 April 1858.

<sup>21</sup>This suggestion is in an undated and unpublished newspaper story written during or shortly after Kane's stay in Utah (untitled manuscript in Kane's handwriting in the file labeled "Concerning the Mormons," Kane Papers, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia).

<sup>22</sup>Stott, *Search for Sanctuary*, 59. In a sermon in Lehi on 1 April, Young compared himself to a man with a family of fifty blind persons to lead over rough roads: "O how thankful I would be if the people could all see better than I" (Historian's Office Journal).

<sup>23</sup>In urging Heber C. Kimball and others to buy tracts in Provo, Young stated that "he wished these brethren to be close by him" (Historian's Office Journal, 23 April and 19 May 1858).

<sup>24</sup>Kate B. Carter, comp., *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 20 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1958–77), 1:359.

<sup>25</sup>Cleland and Brooks, *Mormon Chronicle* 1:156. Lee was told to share the pamphlet only with those who would "keep the Policy at home." It is now a rare document.

<sup>26</sup>Primary sources on Young's ideas and activities are the Manuscript History of the Church, Brigham Young Period, 1844–77, Historian's Office Journal, and several series of Brigham Young Papers, all on microfilm in the LDS Church Archives. Papers of the Presiding Bishop's Office for the period were later lost in a fire, so Hunter's activities must be traced through the journals and records of those who dealt with him.

<sup>27</sup>Fourteenth Ward Minutes, 31 March 1858; Big Cottonwood Ward Minutes, 23 March 1858; Fourteenth Ward Minutes, 14 April 1858; Brigham Young to Bishop Elias H. Blackburn, 24 March 1858, Young Letterbooks; North Cottonwood (Farmington) Ward Minutes, 28 March 1858.

<sup>28</sup>Historian's Office Journal, 30 April 1858; William G. Hartley, "The Miller, the Bishop, and the 'Move South,'" *Brigham Young University Studies* 20 (1979): 103.

<sup>29</sup>Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 186; North Cottonwood Ward Minutes, 22 March–12 April 1858. The main ward movement did not begin until early May, by which time their advance party was already in Nephi (Pitchforth, Diary, 9 May 1858).

<sup>30</sup>Fourteenth Ward Minutes, 14 April 1858.

<sup>31</sup>Andrew Jenson, comp., "History of Tooele Ward." The Jenson collection of ward and stake histories, available on microfilm in the LDS Church Archives, summarizes what is available in the records of all the Church units that existed in 1858. Surviving manuscript ward and stake minutes usually do not alter or substantially expand the historical data that Jenson presents.

<sup>32</sup>For example, Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 186–88.

<sup>33</sup>Salt Lake Twentieth Ward Minutes, 21 March 1858; North Cottonwood Ward Minutes, 22 March 1858; Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier* 2:655. It does not appear that the advance company of five hundred families was ever formally constituted.

<sup>34</sup>North Cottonwood Ward Minutes, 28 March 1858.

<sup>35</sup>G. R., quoted in Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:10–11.

<sup>36</sup>John Zimmerman, quoted in Andrew Jenson, comp., "History of Lehi Ward."



- <sup>37</sup>Salt Lake Fourteenth Ward Minutes, 31 March 1858.
- <sup>38</sup>Warren Foote, *Autobiography and Journals*, 1837–1903; *Journal History*, 17 May 1858; Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 267.
- <sup>39</sup>Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*, 9 vols. (Midvale, Utah: Signature, 1983–85), 5:177–202.
- <sup>40</sup>Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 267.
- <sup>41</sup>Brigham Young to Blackburn, 24 March 1858.
- <sup>42</sup>Historian's Office Journal, 23 April 1858; Jenson, "History of Bountiful Ward"; Jenson, "History of Centerville Ward"; Jenson, "History of Big Cottonwood Ward."
- <sup>43</sup>Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 1:42. An early Payson history declares that "the more indigent of the people were instructed to come as far south as Payson if they could get no further," with the result that the community was soon full of people "dependent upon charity for subsistence" (quoted in Jenson, "History of Payson Ward").
- <sup>44</sup>Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:11–12. John Parry, Patty's new husband, was with the Nauvoo Legion.
- <sup>45</sup>Historian's Office Journal, 10 April 1858.
- <sup>46</sup>Pitchforth, *Diary*, 8 April 1858.
- <sup>47</sup>Pamela Barlow, quoted in Ora H. Barlow, *The Israel Barlow Story and Mormon Mores* (Salt Lake City: Israel Barlow Family Association, 1968), 427.
- <sup>48</sup>Leonard Arrington, *From Quaker to Latter-day Saint: Bishop Edwin D. Woolley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976), 360–69.
- <sup>49</sup>Kimberly Day, "Frederick Kesler, Utah Craftsman," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 56 (Winter 1988): 1, 61–62; David Candland, *Journal* (1841–1901), May–June 1858.
- <sup>50</sup>Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 188–92. Bishop Blackburn censured a man who refused to accept Deseret currency after voting to sustain it (Utah Stake Minutes, 18 April 1858).
- <sup>51</sup>Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 266. This is an unexplained upward revision of the thirty thousand figure in *Great Basin Kingdom*, 186.
- <sup>52</sup>Historian's Office Journal, 4, 6 May 1858; John Lowe Butler, *Autobiography*.
- <sup>53</sup>William C. Staines, *Diary*, 21 May 1858. Governor Cumming's reportedly flirtatious ways could hardly have eased Staines's concerns about the morals of the military.
- <sup>54</sup>Andrew Love Neff, *History of Utah: 1847 to 1869* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1940), 498, 502.
- <sup>55</sup>North Cottonwood Ward Minutes, 7 May 1858; Henry Ballard, *Journal* (1841–1904), 10 June 1858; Manti Ward Minutes, 27 June 1858; Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:11–12; Furniss, *Mormon Conflict*, 187.
- <sup>56</sup>Robert T. Burton, *Diaries*, 1856–1907, 13 June 1858; Hartley, "The Miller, the Bishop, and the 'Move South,'" 105; Arrington, *From Quaker to Latter-day Saint*, 365; Kate B. Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West*, 12 vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1939–51), 10:234.
- <sup>57</sup>Andrew Jenson, "History of West Jordan Ward"; Hartley, "The Bishop, the Miller, and the 'Move South,'" 103–5, details Bishop Joseph Harker's activities, including his 28 June reappointment "by a vote of the meeting" as "Bishop of the camp."
- <sup>58</sup>Nephi Ward Historical Record, 1855–62, 12 April 1858.
- <sup>59</sup>A tradition in the author's family is that the first child of George and Vilate Ellen Douglas Romney was born on a wagon tongue at the Point of the Mountain during the Move South.
- <sup>60</sup>Warren Foote, *Autobiography and Journal*, 151–52.
- <sup>61</sup>Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:19.
- <sup>62</sup>Utah Stake Minutes, 23 May 1858; Lorenzo Brown, *Diaries*, 1853–58, 12 June 1858.
- <sup>63</sup>Esaias Edwards, *Reminiscences and Journal*, 1855–82, 8 August 1858; Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:22, 33; Arrington, *Brigham Young*, 267; Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 191.
- <sup>64</sup>Utah Stake Minutes.
- <sup>65</sup>Historian's Office Journal, 22, 23, 30 April 1858.
- <sup>66</sup>Utah Stake Minutes.
- <sup>67</sup>Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:9.
- <sup>68</sup>Pitchforth, *Diary*, 13 June 1858.
- <sup>69</sup>Historian's Office Journal, 27, 30 June 1858; Utah Stake Minutes, 27 June 1858 (the hymn is "O Ye Mountains High").
- <sup>70</sup>Dispatch to the *New York Tribune*, 2 July 1858, in Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:27–28; George Q. Cannon's life of Wilford Woodruff, quoted in Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West* 10:245.
- <sup>71</sup>Henry Ballard, *Journal* (1841–1904).
- <sup>72</sup>Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:19–22, 386.
- <sup>73</sup>Martin Luther Ensign, *Autobiography* (1897). Ensign added that he shared a scythe and cradle with another man to gather volunteer wheat, killed an ox, and recovered some wheat hidden on a neighbor's farm, "and so did OK during winter 1858–9."
- <sup>74</sup>Manuscript biography of Fitz John Porter, 54, Porter Papers, Library of Congress. Luman Andros Shurtliff reported "an agreeable conversation" with army officers "who behaved as civil as I could expect" (Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage* 2:15).



<sup>75</sup>County and city governments remained under direct Church control for another generation, as did the territorial legislature and delegates to the U.S. House of Representatives.

<sup>76</sup>Neff, *History of Utah*, 499–500.

<sup>77</sup>Kimberly Day, “Frederick Kesler, Utah Craftsman,” 62; Arrington, *From Quaker to Latter-day Saint*, 369.

<sup>78</sup>Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal* 5:207. The bishop of the Nephi Ward “related that Pres Young advised him to have no regular meetings but when one was needed he could call the people together” (Pitchforth, *Diary*, 21 August 1858).

<sup>79</sup>Salt Lake Fourteenth Ward Minutes. The Salt Lake Eighth Ward Minutes for 10 October 1858 begin: “As the people all moved South and the organization of the ward broken up no record was kept until our return.”

<sup>80</sup>A conference of elders was held on 6 October, but both Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball were too ill to attend (Manuscript History, Salt Lake Stake).

<sup>81</sup>Jenson’s ward histories show Relief Societies discontinued in the Salt Lake First, Third, Sixth, Eleventh, Thirteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth wards, and Sunday Schools in the Ninth, Eleventh, and Fourteenth wards.

<sup>82</sup>Manti Ward Minutes, 27 June, 11 July 1858; Nephi Ward Historical Record, 1855–62, 21 May 1858; Pitchforth, *Diary*, 12, 30 May 1858.

<sup>83</sup>Wilford Woodruff noted that Young had been exhausted for some time and did not leave his home/office compound from 2 July until 27 July, when he and other leaders left for an overnight encampment in Big Cottonwood Canyon (Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal* 5:204; Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West* 10:245). Arrington has expressed this view in conversations with the author.

<sup>84</sup>Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, 194.



# Almanacs in the New England Heritage of Mormonism

David J. Whittaker

It has been more than twenty years since Leonard Arrington cautioned Mormon historians to avoid the “solid-achievement bias” in their work. He suggested that historians were too concerned with long treks, irrigation projects, buildings constructed, and the more physical or “solid” (that is, more easily measured) accomplishments of our forefathers and foremothers, and not concerned enough with the ideas of the past.<sup>1</sup> Some historians have taken Arrington’s advice, but most have not. Thus cultural and intellectual history has only begun to find a place in LDS scholarship.

If we are ever to penetrate the individual or collective mentality of the Mormon past, we must take more seriously the world of print early Latter-day Saints both borrowed from and contributed to. While the products of the early Mormon press represent only a partial index to all that was thought or believed in the early Church, they do provide a valuable window that allows us to view both the sources and channels of the intellectual life of early Mormonism.

The products of early Mormon writers can be classified into twelve main categories: proclamations and warnings, doctrinal treatises, petitions for redress, histories, accounts of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, scriptural guides and helps, replies to anti-Mormon attacks, almanacs, newspapers, hymns and poetry, exposés by former members, and special publications.<sup>2</sup> These constitute a large body of source material for those who wish to probe the intellectual and cultural history of early Mormonism. This essay examines the history, context, and content of almanacs in early Mormonism and shows how such a study can assist us to enter more fully into the cultural milieu of early Mormonism.

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In their earliest form, almanacs were calendars. As calendars, they can be found in the earliest societies in the ancient world. They were thus tied into the very cycles of nature and from earliest times were both descriptive and predictive. Until the invention of the printing press, their use was restricted to elite political and religious leaders. After the fifteenth century, almanacs became a staple in the printing business. It is estimated that by 1600 there had been over six hundred different almanacs published in England alone and that by 1700 about two thousand had been issued by about two hundred authors.<sup>3</sup> It seems clear that in seventeenth-century England there were more almanacs than Bibles sold; in fact, as students of the almanac have pointed out, the almanac functioned as the secular Bible. Where the Bible told people how to behave on Sunday, the almanac served as a guide during the rest of the week.<sup>4</sup>

Early American almanacs copied those that had appeared in England. Most English almanacs contained three separate items: (1) the almanac proper, which indicated the astronomical events of the coming year, eclipses, conjunctions, and moveable feasts; (2) the calendar, which showed the days of the week and the months and the fixed church festivals; and (3) the prognostication or astrological forecast of the notable events of the year.<sup>5</sup> Almanacs were popular for a variety of reasons. For one thing, they were one of the few published items that, like the Bible, did not have a quota for the numbers published. In the printing monopoly given by the Crown to the Stationer's Company of London, few works were allowed to exceed 1,500 copies per volume.<sup>6</sup> In addition, almanacs were much less expensive to print than newspapers or books. Further, almanacs were early on excluded from the rigors of censorship and thus became favorite channels of all kinds of political and religious argument. Finally, they were indispensable in an agrarian age when there were few clocks and when people believed strongly in the influence of the moon and stars on their daily lives.<sup>7</sup> The indispensable role of almanacs in past centuries is summarized in a nineteenth-century almanac: "A person without an almanac is somewhat like a ship without a compass; he never knows what to do, nor when to do it."<sup>8</sup>

The almanac played other roles in colonial America. In addition to containing information of immediate and practical value to their readers, almanacs often served the purpose of opening readers' eyes to some of the great events in world history, both past and present. This was particularly true of those people on the frontier who were almost entirely shut off from the rest of the world. Here the almanac taught its reader of past societies and cultures, of kings in far-off lands, of wars and plagues, and of the wonders of



the world. It was in this role that the almanac functioned as a textbook to a society becoming more literate. The first poetry and literature many colonial Americans encountered appeared in the pages of almanacs. Little wonder that Benjamin Franklin considered his *Poor Richard's Almanac* "a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarce any other books."<sup>9</sup>

Unlike the Bible, which emphasized the hereafter, the almanac took care of the here and now.<sup>10</sup> It brought both the starry heavens and the everyday world of the farmer into focus. It contained recipes, antidotes for snake bites, mixtures for potions that cured all kinds of illnesses, and beauty tips, as well as the wisdom of the ages that could be regularly referred to by these agrarian families year after year. In spite of their limited use by historians, these little publications were the most read and used works in colonial America. If we would understand their potential use by and impact on early Mormons, it is important to understand their history and development in early America.

Since there were no American newspapers before 1704 and no magazines before 1740, the almanac served as the only periodical in early America. According to the journal of John Winthrop, the first book printed in British America was the 1639 almanac of Stephen Daye. A 1686 Pennsylvania almanac was the first book printed in the Middle Colonies. The format was established early, and readers came to expect certain features. These included the "Man of Signs," a figure of a man surrounded by astrological signs or drawings with indicators to those parts of the body that are governed by these signs whenever the moon passes through their part of the heavens. This diagram was usually accompanied by a key giving each symbol for the astrological sign. These symbols were usually incorporated into the calendar section of the almanac. Just how seriously publishers and readers took astrology is a topic attracting increasing attention among scholars; we shall return to it later.

Early American almanacs, in time, showed additional signs of standardization. They were heavily influenced by the printer, who was also usually the author or compiler. The practice developed early of using pseudonyms to disguise this fact. Very early, almanacs became a major product of these printers. They were available at bookstores, which were usually a part of the printing establishment, or from itinerant peddlers, who spread these volumes throughout the colonies. With no copyright laws until 1783 (really until 1790 with the Federal Copyright Law), the popularity of the almanac assured that much pirating would occur.



And since almanacs were generally exempt from censorship laws after about 1690, they were important channels of political and social discussions.

The almanacs of seventeenth-century America were called “philomaths” due to their being produced at Harvard by “lovers of math.”<sup>11</sup> These early almanacs were more mathematical and astronomical than their later counterparts and communicated the latest information on Newtonian science and astronomy.<sup>12</sup> As Marion Stowell shows, the list of early almanac makers reads like a list of First Families of Massachusetts.<sup>13</sup>

When the press at Cambridge lost its monopoly on printing after 1675, astrology and other popular interests began to transform the philomath almanac.<sup>14</sup> These changes produced the well-known “farmer’s almanac” of the eighteenth century. The first of these new almanac authors was John Foster, who, as an engraver, added to his 1678 almanac the Man of Signs. But it was John Leeds, in his almanac for 1694, who oriented the contents for farmers. Leeds gave much space to agricultural matters, with specific monthly reminders regarding plowing and planting. In 1695 Leeds added geographical information and road lists that gave mileage distances between major cities.<sup>15</sup>

While Leeds’s almanacs contained astrological information, the almanacs of John Tulley went further by providing prognostications. Tulley also was the first to introduce weather forecasts, an item of critical importance for farmers, whose success depended on the fickle patterns of nature. Tulley’s almanacs were especially noted for their humor and satire, and he used them to advertise his other publications, a practice common in later almanacs.<sup>16</sup>

By Tulley’s time, almanacs had reached their standard American format and use: they were the “clock, calendar, weatherman, reporter, textbook, preacher, guidebook, atlas, navigational aid, doctor, bulletin board, agricultural advisor, and entertainer.”<sup>17</sup> By the early eighteenth century, almanacs were appearing regularly in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. Foster, Tulley, and Leeds had helped create the farmer’s almanac by stressing in just about equal proportion astronomy, astrology, wisdom and humor, history, current events, cures, and weather predictions. Where scholars had produced the seventeenth-century almanacs, practical men of affairs were primarily responsible for those issued in the eighteenth century. The contents became even more practical, and in time, with increased volume, the almanacs themselves began to be specialized, with almanacs issued just for sailors, or farmers, or with specialized contents such as those containing material on evangelical Christianity, medicine, law,



and, of course, on agriculture. Two new kinds of almanacs appeared in the eighteenth century: the pocket almanac, which was a kind of miniature encyclopedia of information, and the register, which specialized in current affairs and miscellaneous legal and governmental data.<sup>18</sup>

The most popular almanacs in the eighteenth century were issued by printing families: Leeds (Daniel and his sons Titan and Felix); Ames (Nathaniel, father and son); and the Franklins (James, Ann, James, Jr., and Benjamin). Other important authors of almanacs were Nathanael Low, Benjamin West, Nathan Daboll, Isaiah and Robert Thomas, and Benjamin Banneker, America's only black almanac maker.

All of these almanacs are valuable sources for students of American history. Students of science can trace the gradual spread of Enlightenment astronomy through successive editions; students of literature can find not only the gradual popularization of European authors, but also the emergence of native prose and poetry in early almanacs; students of political history can trace the growing concern with the ideas and implications of liberty in the pages of almanacs, which clearly served as important channels for political propaganda in the eighteenth century; students of religious history can study the moral literature and theological discourse that surfaced early in these volumes; and students of bibliography can literally follow the history of printing in early America via almanacs.<sup>19</sup>

Most of the characteristics of these eighteenth-century almanacs were carried over into the nineteenth century with two notable changes. The first was the impact of the expansion of a democratic press in the new nation that witnessed a large proliferation of presses and publication; the second was the tendency of newspapers to assume the function of almanacs by expanding upon the same items that almanacs had previously contained. Of course, almanacs continued to be issued, but they increasingly had to compete with newspapers. By the late nineteenth century, industrialization and the consequent decline in agrarian occupations saw the demand for almanacs decrease. Thereafter, almanacs increasingly became compendiums of useful information, more like the pocket almanacs of the eighteenth century. It is with this form that we are the most familiar today.

#### ALMANACS IN EARLY MORMONISM

It would be inconceivable to argue that the Joseph Smith, Sr., family would not have owned and used an almanac or two. Like



most New England farming families, the Smiths would have depended upon an almanac as a compendium of vital information essential for the agrarian life. This would have been particularly true for planting and weather information, and just as true for cooking and medicinal items. It is possible that Lucy Mack Smith was referring to the astrological uses of New England almanacs when she spoke in her history of the family's involvement in "drawing magic circles, and soothsaying."<sup>20</sup> Is it possible that young Joseph had confirmed from an almanac that 22 September 1827, the night he received the gold plates, was to be both the autumnal equinox *and* a new moon, an excellent time to commence new projects?

The student of almanacs is continually frustrated by the fact that their very commonality seems to have assured their non-survival.<sup>21</sup> In spite of their wide use and availability through large and regular printings, today most early American almanacs are considered rare books. We do know that there were about 155 separate known printings of almanacs between 1815 and 1831 in areas close to the Smith home near Palmyra. At least twenty-six almanacs were printed in Canandaigua, thirty-one were issued in Rochester, twenty-one in Ithaca, eleven in Buffalo, nine in Auburn, and at least one in Geneva.<sup>22</sup> Surely some of these items were available through E. B. Grandin's bookstore in Palmyra, from the itinerant peddlers who followed the Erie Canal or other such routes west, or from neighboring farmers.<sup>23</sup> The more common almanacs, the *Western Almanac*, the *Farmer's Almanac*, or *Beer's Ontario Almanac*, must have found their way into the Smith household.

References to almanacs occur in early Mormon newspapers.<sup>24</sup> An almanac was planned as one of the first items to be issued by the early established Literary Firm in Kirtland, Ohio, and in November 1841 the *Times and Seasons* advertised as in press and ready for delivery the "Mormon Almanac and Latter Day Saints Calendar."<sup>25</sup> In the summer of 1841, the *Anti-Mormon Almanac for 1842*, more an anti-Mormon tract than an almanac, appeared in New York. John E. Page published a rebuttal to it.<sup>26</sup> One suspects, with Donald Scott, that in Mormon periodicals, as in other journalism of the period, newspapers came to function as almanacs had during the Colonial period.<sup>27</sup>

The first person in early Mormonism to publish an almanac was Orson Pratt. As early as 22 June 1844, the *Prophet*, a Mormon newspaper in New York City, ran an ad for his *Prophetic Almanac for 1845*. The advertisement suggested that this publication would contain "much matter interesting to the Saints."<sup>28</sup> Ads continued through successive issues, and the 3 August 1844 issue announced



No. 2.—To be continued Annually.

THE  
PROPHETIC ALMANAC,

FOR

1846.

BEING THE SECOND AFTER BISSEXTILE OR LEAP YEAR.

CALCULATED FOR THE EASTERN, MIDDLE AND WESTERN STATES AND  
TERRITORIES, THE NORTHERN PORTIONS OF THE SLAVE STATES, AND  
BRITISH PROVINCES.

BY

ORSON PRATT, A. M.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED AT THE "NEW YORK MESSENGER" OFFICE,  
No. 7, Spruce street.

Price 6½ cents single—\$1 per hundred.

Title page, Orson Pratt, *Prophetic Almanac for 1846*, 19.5 cm in length, courtesy Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo (hereafter cited as Special Collections, Lee Library). Photograph by William W. Mahler.



TWELFTH MONTH.

DECEMBER, 1846.

31 DAYS.

Moon's Phases. New York.				Nauvoo.		FOR New England, New York State, Upper Canada, Michigan. North parts Illinois. Wiscon. and Iowa.			FOR South parts New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, North parts Virginia, and Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illi..Missouri, South Iowa.				
D.	D.	H. M.	H. M.	H. M.	H. M.	Sun	Sun	Moon	Sun	Sun	Moon	H. W.	
	M	W	fast	south	pl.	rises	sets	sets	rises	sets	sets	N. Y.	
1	Tu		10 42	11 14	8	21	28	4 32	5 38	7 18	4 42	5 32	7 15
2	W		10 19	morn	II	21	29	4 31	6 41	7 19	4 41	6 33	8 0
3	Th		9 55	0 8	II	21	29	4 31	rises	7 19	4 41	rises	8 41
4	Fr		9 31	1 1	III	21	30	4 30	6 24	7 20	4 40	6 32	9 19
5	Sa		9 6	1 52	III	21	31	4 29	7 22	7 21	4 39	7 28	9 56
6	Su		8 41	2 42	III	21	31	4 29	8 20	7 21	4 39	8 26	10 32
7	M		8 15	3 29	III	21	31	4 29	9 17	7 21	4 39	9 23	11 9
8	Tu		7 49	4 14	III	21	32	4 28	10 15	7 22	4 38	10 18	11 45
9	W		7 22	4 57	III	21	32	4 28	11 12	7 22	4 38	11 14	ev. 24
10	Th		6 55	5 39	III	21	33	4 27	morn	7 23	4 37	morn	0 59
11	Fr		6 27	6 22	III	21	33	4 27	0 10	7 23	4 37	0 10	2 3
12	Sa		5 59	7 5	III	21	33	4 27	1 8	7 23	4 37	1 6	3 7
13	Su		5 30	7 49	III	21	34	4 26	2 7	7 24	4 36	2 4	4 18
14	M		5 2	8 36	III	21	34	4 26	3 9	7 24	4 36	3 4	5 24
15	Tu		4 33	9 25	III	21	35	4 25	4 9	7 24	4 36	4 3	6 23
16	W		4 3	10 17	III	21	35	4 25	5 11	7 24	4 36	5 4	7 14
17	Th		3 34	11 13	III	21	35	4 25	6 15	7 24	4 36	6 7	7 59
18	Fr		3 4	ev. 10	III	21	36	4 24	sets	7 25	4 35	sets	8 43
19	Sa		2 34	1 8	III	21	36	4 24	6 13	7 25	4 35	6 21	9 24
20	Su		2 4	2 6	III	21	36	4 24	7 21	7 25	4 35	7 27	10 6
21	M		1 34	3 2	III	21	36	4 24	8 33	7 25	4 35	8 37	10 46
22	Tu		1 4	3 56	III	21	36	4 24	9 44	7 25	4 35	9 46	11 29
23	W		0 34	4 49	III	21	36	4 24	10 53	7 25	4 35	10 53	morn
24	Th	Slow	5 41	5 41	III	21	36	4 24	morn	7 25	4 35	morn	0 16
25	Fr		0 26	6 32	III	21	36	4 24	0 6	7 25	4 35	0 5	1 10
26	Sa		0 56	7 23	III	21	35	4 25	1 14	7 25	4 35	1 11	2 17
27	Su		1 25	8 14	III	21	35	4 25	2 22	7 24	4 36	2 18	3 36
28	M		1 55	9 7	III	21	35	4 25	3 28	7 24	4 36	3 21	4 56
29	Tu		2 24	9 59	III	21	35	4 25	4 30	7 24	4 36	4 23	6 4
30	W		2 53	10 52	III	21	34	4 26	5 29	7 24	4 36	5 21	6 58
31	Th		3 22	11 44	III	21	34	4 26	6 23	7 23	4 47	6 15	7 43

### P. P. PRATT AND THE LAWYER!

This gentleman being asked by a lawyer, 'what portion of the present age he thought would be saved,' replied, 'that he did not know.'

'Well,' said the lawyer, 'give us your best judgment on the subject.'

Being somewhat importuned for a reply, Mr. P. observed, 'that he thought perhaps about four fifths of the whole.'

'How so,' enquired the lawyer, somewhat surprised at "Mormon" liberality.

'Because,' replied Mr. P., 'there are about that proportion of the world who don't know enough to be damned.'



the volume as “just published.” One year later, the *New York Messenger* (the renamed *Prophet*) announced as published the *Prophetic Almanac for 1846*.<sup>29</sup> By the end of October 1845, Pratt was offering a free copy of the 1846 almanac to each subscriber to the *Messenger* as well as encouraging each current subscriber to purchase ten or twelve copies of the six-and-a-half-cent volume to give as gifts to friends and neighbors.<sup>30</sup> Although the title page declared that the almanac was “to be continued annually,” Pratt never published another. He did prepare a “Prophetic Almanac for 1849,” which was to be issued at Winter Quarters, but as there was no press in operation there at that time, the work remained in manuscript. At least one copy was made of the original manuscript, apparently for the use of those traveling west to the Salt Lake Valley that year.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to their value in making some money for a missionary who traveled without purse or scrip, Orson Pratt’s almanacs were outlets for his mathematical skills. By publishing these almanacs, he was also providing a product that Americans of his time demanded. Of course, dozens of other almanacs were available to his customers, but Orson was apparently trying to provide a publication that could be both addressed to Mormons and also used as a missionary tool if non-Mormons read it. In this sense it was a hybrid. For his first almanac, Orson Pratt seems to have borrowed from the contents and form of the many other almanacs that were available to him in New York City. It was not blind copying, however; as he warned readers in his 1845 almanac, several of the eclipses as published in the *Comic Almanac* of Turner and Fisher were incorrect.<sup>32</sup>

His first almanac contained the standard items Americans had come to expect. Central to the volume was the calendar, which told of the times of the rising and setting of the sun and moon, adjusted according to certain geographical regions along the East Coast of the United States. Dates and places for both solar and lunar eclipses for the year were also provided, along with tidal tables. The moon’s place in the twelve signs of the zodiac was also given. Pratt included in his calendar section birthdays and deathdays for selected secular leaders and authors such as Thomas Jefferson, Queen Victoria, William Pitt, Alexander Pope, John Milton, William Penn, and Christopher Columbus, and similar information on religious figures such as St. George, St. Bartholomew, and St. Augustine. He also included dates of events of the American Revolution, such as the Battle of Bunker Hill and Independence. The fact that there were no references to Mormon people or events in the calendar section might suggest how derivative this part of the almanac was.



In his “fillers,” Pratt included material from his brother Parley and from Joseph Smith, as well as his own compositions. Following a well-established tradition of adding “wisdom” literature to the almanacs, Orson wrote of “The Mormon Creed,” in which he spoke of man being the offspring of God and declared that man’s final destiny was to be like God. He further suggested that the present forms of political government seen by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2) were soon to be ended by the establishment of the kingdom of God. He also included a copy of the “American Exile’s Memorial to Congress” as well as a copy of a letter dated 11 May 1844 that he sent to the chairman of the United States Senate Committee of the Judiciary. Here he spoke as a proud American citizen whose rights had been violated in persecution, as well as a messenger of the final establishment of God’s kingdom on earth.

As the master missionary, he also included comparative material for the reader to see the “Doctrines of Christ” beside the “Doctrines of Men,” concluding with the “Dialogue between Tradition, Reason, and Scriptus,” which presented his case for the truthfulness of Mormonism. Finally, in good almanac tradition, the last page contained ads for other LDS publications.

In his second almanac, Orson clearly broke away from the more secular model he seems to have followed the year before. For example, with the exception of the Fourth of July, there are no other religious or secular names or events in the calendar. Instead, the birthdays of the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and key dates in Joseph Smith’s life appear. In introducing the “Names and Characters” of the twelve signs of the zodiac, which were simply identified in his 1845 work, Orson added in the 1846 almanac the comment, “which, according to the vulgar and erroneous ideas of the Ancients, govern the different parts of the human system.”<sup>33</sup>

He continued adding essays on Mormon doctrine, including a look at Catholicism, or, to use his words, “Popery,” and Protestantism in comparison with Mormonism in an article entitled “Review of the World.” He also added a note of humor in “P. P. Pratt and the Lawyer!” thus continuing a long tradition in which almanac makers poked fun at lawyers.<sup>34</sup> The almanac also contained essays on “Four Kinds of Salvation” (written by Parley P. Pratt);<sup>35</sup> “Materiality” (which foreshadowed Orson’s later pamphlet *The Absurdies of Immaterialism* and which was also dependent upon earlier writing by Parley); and a prophetic essay on Mormonism as the foretold kingdom spoken of by Daniel to be established in the last days. He concluded with “A Parable”



about a proposed wedding, to which he attached an interpretation. Here was a sample of the puzzle-parables to be found in earlier American almanacs.<sup>36</sup> Again, the last page contained advertisements for LDS publications. The unpublished almanac for 1849 contained only calendar sections. Apparently no “filler” material was prepared.

Orson Pratt adapted the almanac format to Mormon missionary work. He also assumed a Newtonian universe, in which the gravity of *all* celestial bodies exerted influence on all other heavenly bodies, a scientific position that was seen as pulling the carpet out from under the central belief in the efficacy of astrology.<sup>37</sup> But the fact that Orson included astrological information in his almanacs suggests that his intended audience expected it to be there.<sup>38</sup>

Between 1851 and 1866, William W. Phelps compiled fourteen known almanacs. During the first few years they were titled *Deseret Almanac*; by 1859 they were simply titled *Almanac*, but the title *Deseret Almanac* appeared again in 1865. The early editions were the first almanacs published in the Great Basin, and thus for a few years Phelps seems to have enjoyed a monopoly of almanac making, but he was struggling with other competitors before the Civil War. Phelps’s own personality is evident throughout these publications. They also provide us with a window into early Utah culture. For Phelps, almanacs were primarily financial ventures, a key element in his yearly income. For his customers, they provided the necessary items all Americans had come to expect from almanacs, including the calendar, weather and astrological information, key dates in history, recipes and potions, and a variety of useful and practical information for people living on the frontier.

Phelps was a newspaperman before his conversion to the LDS church in 1831.<sup>39</sup> Called early to assist with the publishing activities of the Church, Phelps contributed his newspaper skills to the infant organization.<sup>40</sup> Following his baptism, he traveled to Independence, Missouri, where he published the first LDS newspaper, the *Evening and the Morning Star*. This work was the first product of the early Literary Firm, which was also to issue an almanac as part of its work.<sup>41</sup> As an author, Phelps continued to contribute his poetry and prose to the Mormon cause to the end of his life in 1872.<sup>42</sup>

The *Deseret Almanac* for 1851 was Phelps’s first effort. He borrowed most of the astronomical material from the *Nautical Almanac* (as he informed his readers) and took a decidedly anti-astrological stance:



The signs, usual in Almanacs, are omitted as matters of ancient fancy, which never had nor never will have a being or body (as represented by old Almanac-makers) on earth or in heaven. . . . [Thus] most of the arbitrary characters, as well as the signs and wonders, are omitted as useless.<sup>43</sup>

This first almanac contained no advertising, suggesting the primitive commercial conditions of the early Mormon settlement. The almanac gave readers a twenty-one-year chronology of the history of the Church. Phelps also included some LDS dates in the calendar section, but the bulk of the calendar section contained proverbial material, such as "Vanity and vice ride, while wisdom goes on foot" or "The religion of the world is like dust, which falls upon everything, and remains till it is washed off by a refreshing shower from heaven." The sixteen-page almanac ended with lists of the current members of the Church's First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Phelps's second, and lengthiest, almanac (forty-eight pages) was prepared for 1852. He again began the work by criticizing astrology, specifically the idea that the stars can "govern the anatomy of man's body." These ideas of "some farmers and women" were obviously not to be relied on, mainly because no one could measure the distance to Aries! This almanac moved closer to the traditional American almanac by providing recipes for such things as whitewash, Scotch bread, wedding cake, and wine; poems; tables for measuring corn and wheat; lists of discoveries and inventions in world history; lists of Church leaders, territorial officers, officers of the Nauvoo Legion, justices of the peace; and, perhaps most importantly, lists of operating post offices with arrival and departure schedules for the mails. The calendar section contained dates important in Mormon history, but also included dates from American history and several proverbs.<sup>44</sup>

The length of the 1852 volume allowed Phelps to add a variety of essays, particularly short pieces on the moon, planets, and climate, as well as more down-to-earth topics such as education, "Rules for myself," and even an antiastrology piece, "Philosophy of the Heavens." For the first time he included advertisements. He closed the volume by requesting information on the schools and students who were attending throughout the territory and by asking readers to submit recipes for the next year's edition.

The rest of Phelps's almanacs generally followed the pattern he established in the first two, although he broadened them in several ways. By adding material that went beyond Mormon history to United States and world history, he encouraged a larger worldview among his readers and in a certain sense provided a



NO. 5.

DESERET  
ALMANAC,

FOR THE YEAR

1855;

Being the third after Leap Year, and after the Sixth of April, the Twenty Fifth  
Year of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints:  
AND THE FIFTH OF THE LAST HALF CENTURY OF THIS DISPENSATION.

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CALCULATED FOR THE LATITUDE AND MERIDIAN OF  
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY:

CONTAINING ALSO, MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS, FACTS, SCIENTIFIC TABLES, ETCETERA.

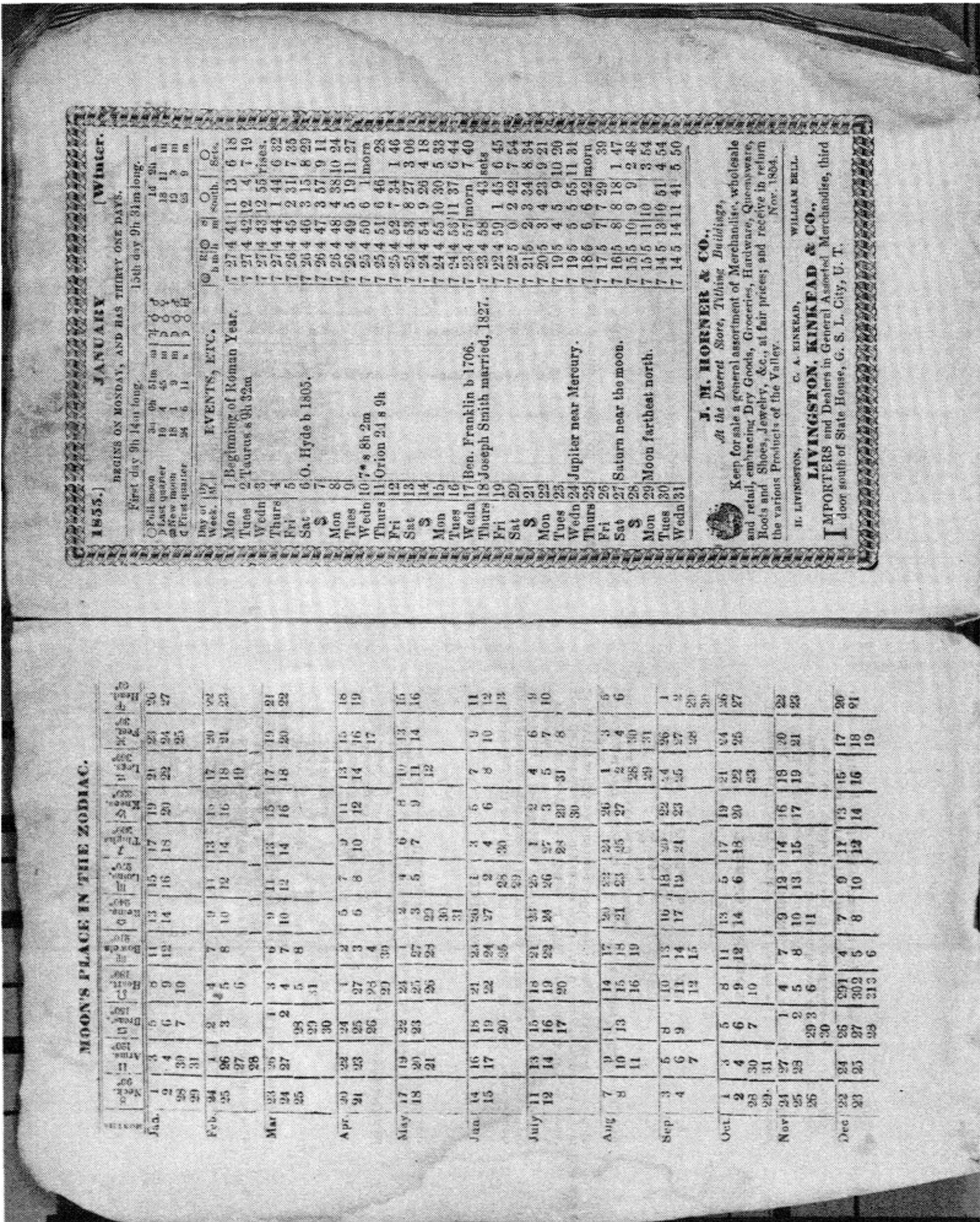
BY WILLIAM W. PHELPS.

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ARIEH C. BROWER, PRINTER.  
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY:  
1855.

Title page, W. W. Phelps, *Deseret Almanac, for the Year 1855*, 19.5 cm in length, courtesy Special Collections, Lee Library. Photograph by William W. Mahler.





Pages 2-3 from W. W. Phelps, *Deseret Almanac for the Year 1855*, 19.5 cm in length, courtesy Special Collections, Lee Library. Photograph by William W. Mahler.



textbook of information. (Phelps was very involved in early Utah education.) And he devoted increased space to advertisements, which gave him a better income and developed broader outlets for his almanacs, since businesses that advertised usually gave copies away to their customers. His later almanacs contained so many ads that they provide a kind of business directory to early Salt Lake City.<sup>45</sup> He discontinued including proverbial material in his calendar section with the 1855 volume and increased the medical recipes in the later volumes.

Copies of Phelps's almanacs for 1851–55 and 1859–65 are extant. There is evidence he intended to publish a combined volume for 1856 and 1857,<sup>46</sup> and his almanac for 1860 refers to the volume for 1858.<sup>47</sup> There is also evidence he sent to press another volume for 1866 and 1867, but no copies have been located.<sup>48</sup>

As early as February 1851, Phelps was supplying the *Deseret News* with weather and astronomical information.<sup>49</sup> The editor of the *Deseret News* was Willard Richards, who also published Phelps's early almanacs. Phelps also took occasion in the early issues of the *Deseret News* to attack the astrology of the almanacs, although he changed his mind for a brief period.<sup>50</sup> In January 1857, the Utah Territorial Legislature created the office of Superintendent of Meteorological Observations. William Phelps was the first person appointed to this position, no doubt in part because of his reputation for astronomical knowledge as expressed in his publications.

Phelps's 1860 almanac caught the attention of Richard Burton, who summarized its contents in his *The City of the Saints*,<sup>51</sup> and also of Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, in their *A Journey to Great-Salt-Lake City*.<sup>52</sup> In this same almanac, Phelps included a section entitled "Almanac" and told his readers:

The word ALMANAC is probably of Arabic origin and means a daily calculation for the rising, setting, and position of the sun, moon, planets, stars, constellations and phenomena of a year, in advance; and anciently and modernly, contains many other matters of motion that may facilitate the business transactions of man.

A person without an Almanac is somewhat like a ship at sea, without a compass; he never knows what to do, nor when to do it:

So Mormon, others, sect and Quaker,  
Buy Almanacs, and pay the maker.<sup>53</sup>

Enough has been said to suggest that, as Americans, early Mormons acquired and used almanacs for a variety of purposes. They did not have to depend on those issued by either Orson Pratt or William W. Phelps, for these Mormon-produced almanacs essentially shared the same characteristics as most other American



almanacs. Of course, they were localized and "Mormonized." But on their pages the modern student can gain some of the flavor of a now-gone era, and particularly of the mental world of the common man.

Almanacs were a form of street literature, a category of printed matter that has yet to be fully studied.<sup>54</sup> Along with broadsides, various tracts and pamphlets, handbills, proclamations, and chapbooks, almanacs were forms of communication separate and apart from the upper levels of the philosophical discourse of intellectuals. Here was a literary form that reached into the lives of common people as it informed, educated, and entertained.

The modern student who peruses Phelps's almanacs can imaginatively enter into the cultural world of early Utah. One can glimpse, for example, the major medical concerns of an earlier generation by reading of the potions recommended for their cure. Articles on tanning hides, curing diarrhea, treating cuts and bruises, making candles, preparing vegetable glue, and preventing skippers in hams, suggestions on how to preserve various foods, how to soften water or stain wood, how to remove ink stains, or "How to feed fowls in such a manner that they will lay eggs during the winter season" can bring us closer to the daily lives and thoughts of our ancestors. All of these topics, and they could be multiplied, are treated in Phelps's almanacs for 1863 and 1864.

Beyond the more secular dimensions of pioneer life were the religious and cultural aspects. These almanacs sought, through their emphasis on history, to give their readers a sense of place and time in both local and world history. Religious essays and counsel brought order and comfort to their lives, and the millennial expectations of both the soon to be established kingdom of God and the anticipated destruction to be wrought by the American Civil War probably gave a sense of hope and expectation to their unsure lives as frontier farmers.<sup>55</sup> Chronologies and calendars helped common people place themselves on the timetable of earth's history. The wise sayings helped them feel a part of the wisdom that was considered ageless.<sup>56</sup> Astrological items helped do the same by relating those who believed in it to the larger cosmos.<sup>57</sup> Mormon symbolism, with its heavy emphasis on celestial bodies (moon, sun, and stars) and nature surely allowed many early members to feel more at home with astrology.

All these items gave the average person a sense of power as it gave them a sense of identity. Because knowledge is power, these almanacs helped agrarian families feel that they could gain control over the world they found themselves in. And in the world of the



# ALMANAC

FOR THE YEAR

# 1859

The Third after Leap Year; and after the 6th of April,  
Thirtieth year of the Church of Jesus Christ of  
Latter Day Saints.

BY W. W. PHELPS.

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY. UTAH:

PRINTED BY J. MCKNIGHT.

1859.

Title page, W. W. Phelps, *Almanac for the Year 1859*, 13.5 cm in length, courtesy Special Collections, Lee Library. Photograph by William W. Mahler.



A REVELATION AND PROPHECY BY THE  
PROPHET, SEER, AND REVELATOR,  
JOSEPH SMITH.

GIVEN DECEMBER 25th, 1832.

“Verily thus saith the Lord, concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls. The days will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at that place; for behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon other nations, in order to defend themselves against other nations; and thus war shall be poured out upon all nations. And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their Masters, who shall be marshalled and disciplined for war: And it shall come to pass also, that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceeding angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation; and thus, with the sword, and by bloodshed, the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn, and with famine, and plague, and earthquakes, and the thunder of Heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed, hath made a full end of all nations; that the cry of the Saints, and of the blood of the Lord of Sabbath, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies. Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come, for behold it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen.

On the 20th day of December, 1860, South Carolina seceded.

JAMES LAWSON,  
FIRST-RATE Blacksmith, ready for business: half  
block south of Union Square, 19th Ward.

WILLIAM NEWELL,  
CARRIES on Shoemaking, West side of East Temple  
street; a few doors south of Dinwoodle's chair shop.

A TABLE  
Showing the number of days from any day in one  
month, to the same day in any other month, through-  
out the year.

Months.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Jan.	365	31	59	90	120	151	181	212	243	273	304	334
Feb.	334	28	58	89	119	150	181	212	243	273	304	334
Mar.	306	29	59	90	120	151	181	212	243	273	304	334
April.	273	26	56	87	117	148	178	209	240	270	301	331
May.	245	27	57	88	118	149	179	210	241	271	302	332
June.	214	24	54	85	115	146	176	207	238	268	299	329
July.	181	21	51	82	112	143	173	204	235	265	296	326
August.	153	18	53	84	114	145	175	206	237	267	298	328
September.	122	15	52	83	113	144	174	205	236	266	297	327
October.	92	12	51	82	112	143	173	204	235	265	296	326
November.	61	9	50	81	111	142	172	203	234	264	295	325
December.	31	6	50	81	111	142	172	203	234	264	295	325



# ALMANAC

FOR THE YEAR

# 1862

BEING THE THIRTY THIRD YEAR OF THE  
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY  
SAINTS. (From April 6, 1830)

Calculated for Utah.—Lat.  $40^{\circ} 45m.$  north, and Longi-  
tude  $111^{\circ} 26m.$  west of Greenwich.

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BY W. W. PHELPS.

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GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH:

PRINTED AT 'DESERET NEWS' OFFICE.

1861.

Title page, W. W. Phelps, *Almanac for the Year 1862*, 13 cm in length, courtesy Special Collections, Lee Library. Photograph by William W. Mahler.



## USEFUL RECIPES.

### HOW STEARIN CANDLES ARE MADE.

The fat or tallow is first boiled with quick-lime, and made into soap, and then the soap is decomposed by sulphuric acid, which takes away the lime and leaves the fat re-arranged as stearic acid, while a quantity of glycerin is produced at the same time. Glycerin comes out of the tallow in this chemical change. The oil is then pressed out of it; and the impurities are carried out by the oily part as the pressure goes on increasing; what is left is the stearin, which is melted and cast into candles. It is hard as wax, and not a bit more greasy.

### TO MAKE HENS LAY.

A Correspondent of the "Prairie Farmer" says:—"I send you a recipe for making hens lay: Take some oats and boil them until soft; then fry them in hot fat, and you will have any quantity of eggs."

### TO RENDER HARD WATER SOFT.

For every hundred gallons take half a pound of the best quick lime, make it into a cream by the addition of water; then diffuse it through the hard water in a tank or reservoir, and allow the whole to stand; it will quickly be bright, the lime having united with the carbonate of lime (which made the water hard), will be all deposited. This is one of the most beautiful applications of the art of chemistry.

### FIRE AND WATERPROOF PREPARATION.

Slack common stone lime in a close vessel; when cool pass eight quarts through a fine sieve, and add to it a quart of fine salt and two gallons of pure water. Boil

and skim. Then, to every four gallons of this mixture, add one and a quarter pound of rock alum, three fourths of a pound of copperas, half a pound of potash, and five quarts of fine beach sand. This wash will now admit any coloring matter that may be desired, and may be applied with a paint or whitewash brush, in the same manner as oil paints. It looks better than paint, will stop leaks in the roof, prevent moss from growing, and when laid upon brick-work, will render it impenetrable to rain or moisture.

### TO PRESERVE HERBS.

The best way to preserve sweet and savory herbs for winter use, is—

1. To gather them at the right time, that is, just before they begin to flower.

2. For that purpose be sure to choose a fine dry day, and gather them when the dew is off.

3. To clean them well from dust and dirt; cut off the roots, and separate the bunches into smaller ones.

Dry them as quickly as possible without scorching them; the best way of doing this is to lay them prettily singly on a stove or in a Dutch oven in front of the fire. Thus their flavor and color will be best preserved.

6. When thoroughly dried, pick off the leaves, pound and rub through a hair sieve, and keep them in bottles closely stopped down.

Basil— is in the best state for drying from the middle of August and three weeks after.

Knotted Marjoram—from the beginning of July, and during the same.

Winter and Summer Savory—the latter end of July, and throughout August.

Thyme, Lemon Thyme, and Orange Thyme—during June and July.

Mint—latter end of June, and during July.



farmer, weather information was especially important in the ongoing battle with nature.

In preindustrial societies, the cycles of nature and the absence of calendars and clocks turned the attention of all people to the cycles of the heavens for establishing order in their lives. Astrology was thus a means for turning the mystery of the universe into a puzzle, and of course, puzzles are capable of solution. As Keith Thomas has suggested, astrology was never an exact science, but it attracted men of intelligence because it offered a coherent system of thought that helped people bring order and understanding to their world. Astrology also offered a practical guide for people who sought self-knowledge; horoscopes functioned in ways very similar to psychoanalysis today.<sup>58</sup>

Almanacs, then, offer us another window into the world of the past. They were probably the most important and consistent meeting ground of high and popular culture, and thus are important tools for the new social history that tries to recover the lives and thoughts of average people. Almanacs invite us, as they did our ancestors, to more fully see and understand the world around us.<sup>59</sup> Almanacs were mirrors of, as much as they were windows to, early Mormons. They still are for students of Mormon history.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Leonard J. Arrington, "The Search for Truth and Meaning in Mormon History," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 3 (Summer 1968): 62-63.

<sup>2</sup>See David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1982), 71-81.

<sup>3</sup>Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 294. On the early Chinese almanacs see Martin Palmer, ed. and trans., *T'ung Shu, The Ancient Chinese Almanac* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1986).

<sup>4</sup>See, for example, the comments of Marion Barber Stowell, *Early American Almanacs, The Colonial Weekday Bible* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1977), x. Eustace Bosanquet, "English 17th Century Almanacks," *Library*, 4th ser., 10 (March 1930): 361, notes that "no book in the English language had as large a circulation as the annual Almanack" (cited in Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, "Some Conjectures about the Impact of Printing on Western Society and Thought: A Preliminary Report," *Journal of Modern History* 40 [March 1968]: 34).

<sup>5</sup>Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 293. See also David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 7, 10, 58-61, 76, 81-83, 111.

<sup>6</sup>See Cyprian Blagden, *The Stationers' Company: A History, 1403-1959* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1977).

<sup>7</sup>These items are summarized from a variety of scholarly studies on almanacs, including Louis K. Wechsler, *The Common People of Colonial America* (New York: Vantage Press, 1978); Robb Sagendorph, *America and Her Almanacs: Wit, Wisdom, and Weather, 1639-1970* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970); George Lyman Kittredge, *The Old Farmer and His Almanac* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924); Joseph P. Goldberg, "The Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia Almanac and Its English Counterpart" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1962); Susan Elizabeth Lyman, "Colonial Life and Learning as Reflected in American Almanacs, 1639-1776" (Master's thesis, Columbia University, 1933); Robert T. Sidwell, "The Colonial American Almanacs: A Study in Non-Institutional Education"



(Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 1965); and Bernard Capp, *Astrology and the Popular Press: English Almanacs, 1500-1800* (London: Faber and Faber, 1979). Important bibliographical listings include Hugh Alexander Morrison, *Preliminary Check List of American Almanacs, 1639-1800* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1907); and, most completely, Milton Drake, comp., *Almanacs of the United States*, 2 vols. (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1962).

<sup>8</sup>W. W. Phelps cited in Drake, *Almanacs of the United States*, 1:[ix]. See also text at n. 53.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in Lawrence Cremin, *American Education: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 389. See also C. William Miller, "Franklin's *Poor Richard Almanacs*: Their Printing and Publication," *Studies in Bibliography* 14 (1961): 97-115, and John F. Ross, "The Character of *Poor Richard*: Its Source and Alteration," *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association* 55 (September 1940): 785-94. Franklin's commercial success as a printer was due mainly to his almanacs. A useful summary is Bernard Fay, *Franklin: The Apostle of Modern Times* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1929), 156-69. It is estimated that Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* sold about ten thousand copies annually, but it was not as popular as those issued by Nathaniel Ames, which sold about sixty thousand copies per year, not counting the large number of pirated copies that also circulated in the eighteenth century.

<sup>10</sup>Paraphrased from Stowell, *Early American Almanacs*, x. Students of American history have noted over the years the important role the almanac played in the lives of people: "On the popular level the magazine and especially the almanacs contributed to the diffusion of scientific knowledge" (Merle Curti, *The Growth of American Thought*, 2d ed. [New York: Harper and Row, 1951], 90); "In books, sermons, pamphlets and almanacs . . . the seminal ideas of the Enlightenment circulated in America" (Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt* [New York: Capricorn Books, 1964], 182-83); "Geographic and economic conditions limited the reading of common people during the colonial period mainly to the Bible and the almanac" (Wechsler, *Common People of Colonial America*, xiv); "Almanacs spread up-to-date political information, opinion, and arguments in the years just before the Revolution" (Daniel Boorstin, *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* [New York: Random House, 1958], 326). See also Chester N. Greenough, "New England Almanacs, 1766-1776, and the American Revolution," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, n.s. 45 (October 1933): 288-316; and Clarence Brigham, "An Account of American Almanacs and Their Value for Historical Study," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, n.s. 34 (October 1925): 3-28.

<sup>11</sup>See the discussions in Sidwell, "Colonial American Almanacs," 1-19; Stowell, *Early American Almanacs*, 36-47; and Cremin, *American Education*, 390.

<sup>12</sup>Useful studies include N. W. Lovely, "Notes on New England Almanacs," *New England Quarterly* 8 (June 1935): 264-77; M. Nicolson, "English Almanacs and the 'New Astronomy,'" *Annals of Science* 4 (1939-40): 1-33; and Chester E. Jorgenson, "The New Science in the Almanacs of Ames and Franklin," *New England Quarterly* 8 (December 1935): 555-61. See also Norriss S. Hetherington, "Almanacs and the Extent of Knowledge of the New Astronomy in Seventeenth Century England," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 119 (August 1975): 275-79. This trend is summarized by Clinton Rossiter: "The assumptions and attitudes of Newtonian science [were] made palatable . . . to the people in almanacs and newspapers" (*The First American Revolution* [New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1956], 207). As Sidwell points out, of the forty-four extant almanacs issued before 1687, forty-one were prepared by twenty-six graduates of Harvard ("Colonial American Almanacs," 2-3).

<sup>13</sup>These include ministers, college presidents, and governors. See the list in Stowell, *Early American Almanacs*, 41. See also Charles L. Nichols, "Notes on the Almanacs of Massachusetts," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, n.s. 22 (1912): 21.

<sup>14</sup>These changes are discussed in Stowell, *Early American Almanacs*, 55-56. Part of the larger story is presented in William D. Stahlman, "Astrology in Colonial America: An Extended Query," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 13 (October 1956): 551-63.

<sup>15</sup>See briefly Stowell, *Early American Almanacs*, 55ff.; the more detailed discussion in Sidwell, "Colonial American Almanacs," 83-193; and Cyprian Blagdon, "The Distribution of Almanacs in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Studies in Bibliography* 11 (1958): 107-16.

<sup>16</sup>See Richard F. Hixson, *Issac Collins: A Quaker Printer in 18th Century America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1968), 31. See also Robert K. Dodge, "Didactic Humor in the Almanacs of Early America," *Journal of Popular Culture* 5 (Winter 1971): 592-605. On Tulley, see Alfred B. Page, "The Almanacs of John Tulley: 1687-1702," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* 13 (July 1912): 207-23.

<sup>17</sup>Stowell, *Early American Almanacs*, ix.

<sup>18</sup>See the summary in *ibid.*, 65-66. See also Victor Hugo Paltsits, "The Almanacs of Roger Sherman, 1750-1761," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, n.s. 18 (April 1907): 213-58.

<sup>19</sup>In addition to the scholarly studies cited above, see Francisco Guerra, "Medical Almanacs of the American Colonial Period," *Journal of the History of Medicine* 16 (1961): 234-55; and Marion Barber Stowell, "American Almanacs and Feuds," *Early American Literature* 9 (Winter 1975): 276-86. For information on French almanacs see Lise Andries, "Almanacs: Revolutionizing a Traditional Genre," in Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche, eds., *Revolution in Print, The Press in France, 1775-1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press in collaboration with the New York Public Library, 1989), 203-22.



<sup>20</sup>This passage has been deleted from all the published versions of Lucy Mack Smith's history, but it can be found in the "Preliminary Manuscript," 77, Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives).

<sup>21</sup>Almanacs are absent from the inventories that exist either of libraries in Palmyra/Manchester or of Mormon collections or printing establishments during Joseph Smith's lifetime. This in spite of the clear indications that such publications were commonly used. Of course more work needs to be done on the reading habits and book ownership of early Mormons, but so far almanacs do not show up on currently available lists. An important guide to early Mormon publications, including almanacs, is Chad J. Flake, ed., *A Mormon Bibliography, 1830-1930* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1978).

<sup>22</sup>These numbers are based on surviving copies as inventoried in Milton Drake, *Almanacs of the United States*. Drake's inventory is arranged chronologically by state and year.

<sup>23</sup>As J. R. Dolan shows, peddlers carried almanacs as part of their wares into the nooks and corners of early America (*The Yankee Peddlers of Early America* [New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1964]). The role of the local printer's office is described in Milton W. Hamilton, *The Country Printer, New York State, 1785-1830*, 2d ed. (Port Washington, N.Y.: Ira J. Friedman, 1964). Many local printers had a reading room at their printshop where customers could examine the latest products of the press, including almanacs. Thus the local printing office was often the cultural center of the community in addition to its function as a bookshop (see Hamilton, *Country Printer*, 78-82, 247). An extended study of the role of almanacs in the early years of the new nation is Jon Stanley Wenrick, "For Education and Entertainment—Almanacs in the Early American Republic, 1783-1815" (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1974). For a brief study focusing on the pre-Civil War era see F. G. Woodward, "An Early Tennessee Almanac and Its Maker: Hill's Almanac, 1825-1862," *Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin* 18 (March 1952): 9-14.

<sup>24</sup>*The Evening and the Morning Star*, the first newspaper issued by the Church, cited material from an almanac by Fisher Ames (see vol. 1 [December 1832]: [6-7]). The *Nauvoo Neighbor* cited information about preserving potatoes from the *American Agriculturalist's Almanac* (vol. 1 [27 December 1843]); the *Prophet* mentions a phrenological almanac (vol. 1 [1 June 1844]) and a nautical almanac (vol. 1 [15 June 1844]). The comments of Parley P. Pratt in his 1837 *Voice of Warning* suggest even more: "The predictions of the prophets can be clearly understood, as much so as the Almanac" (13).

<sup>25</sup>*Far West Record*, 30 April 1832, MS, LDS Church Archives (more conveniently found in Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record: Minutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1844* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 46); *Times and Seasons* 3 (15 November 1841): 599. Peter Crawley called this last item to my attention. No doubt almanacs were available to Mormons in the Whitney Store in Kirtland, Ohio, and in the Windsor Lyon drugstore in Nauvoo, Illinois.

<sup>26</sup>A copy of the *Anti-Mormon Almanac* for 1842 is in the LDS Church Archives. John E. Page's reply was *Slander Refuted*, probably published late in 1841 in Philadelphia. The *Times and Seasons* 2 (16 August 1841): 513-14, took note of the appearance of the *Anti-Mormon Almanac*. In 1855 the *Chicago Tribune*, with heavy satire, accused Mormons of using almanacs to find texts for their sermons (see *The Mormon* [New York City] 1 [15 December 1855]. This item was called to my attention by Craig Foster). To emphasize Joseph Smith's great accomplishments, Martin Harris said in 1870, "Joseph Smith could not print a almanac in his day but he did it all" (cited in a letter of John MacNeil, 18 November 1870, in Frederick Stewart Buchanan, ed., *A Good Time Coming: Mormon Letters to Scotland* [Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988], 104).

<sup>27</sup>Donald M. Scott, "Print and the Public Lecture System, 1840-60," in *Printing and Society in Early America*, ed. William L. Joyce, David D. Hall, Richard D. Brown, and John B. Hench (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1983), 291.

<sup>28</sup>*Prophet*, 22 June 1844. This was the second publication by the man who became one of the most prolific writers in early Mormonism. For a study of these publishing activities, see David J. Whittaker, "Orson Pratt: Prolific Pamphleteer," *Dialogue* 15 (Autumn 1982): 27-42. A book-length study of Orson Pratt's life is Breck England, *The Life and Thought of Orson Pratt* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985).

<sup>29</sup>*New York Messenger*, 2, 9 August 1845. In a letter to Reuben Hedlock, dated 20 August 1845, Pratt said that the 1846 almanac was printed in an edition of five thousand copies (see *New York Messenger*, 30 August 1845, 67).

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 18 October 1845.

<sup>31</sup>The two copies of the five-page, legal size manuscript, one in Orson Pratt's handwriting and the other in the hand of Thomas Bullock, are in the LDS Church Archives. The text includes notes to the printer showing that Pratt intended publication. See also *Journal History*, 1 January 1849, 3. There is evidence that Orson intended to publish another almanac for British Latter-day Saints in the 1850s.

<sup>32</sup>*Prophetic Almanac for 1845* (New York: Published at the *Prophet* Office, 1844), [2].

<sup>33</sup>*Prophetic Almanac for 1846* (New York: Published at the *New York Messenger* Office, 1845), [2]. He did add to his almanac information relating the parts of the body to the respective sign in the zodiac. He included the same caution in his unpublished almanac for 1849.

<sup>34</sup>See Sidwell, "Colonial American Almanacs," 62-63, 84, 89-90.



<sup>35</sup>It had appeared in the *Millennial Star* 2 (June 1841): 21–22.

<sup>36</sup>See Sidwell, "Colonial American Almanacs," 145, 214–215.

<sup>37</sup>See the short summary in Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution: Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), 94, 260ff.

<sup>38</sup>The same was true for colonial American almanacs. Even though many of the almanac makers did not approve of astrology, they learned that their volumes would not sell if such material were deleted. For example, when John Holt refused to put astrological items in his New York almanac for 1767, people refused to buy it, so he put them back in the next year (see Wechsler, *Common People*, xv).

<sup>39</sup>For biographical information on Phelps, see Walter Dean Bowen, "The Versatile W. W. Phelps—Mormon Writer, Educator, and Pioneer" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1958).

<sup>40</sup>In section 55 of the Doctrine and Covenants, Phelps is called to assist Oliver Cowdery in the "work of printing" and to specifically help in selecting and writing books for schools in the Church. This was the beginning of his writing and publishing career in the early Church. As late as October 1864 Phelps was asking Brigham Young to help him to fulfill this early revelation by obtaining a general conference vote for him to proceed with further publishing for the Church (see his letter to Young, 8 October 1864, MS, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives).

<sup>41</sup>The best summary of the history and work of the Literary Firm is in Lyndon W. Cook, *Joseph Smith and the Law of Consecration* (Provo: Grandin, 1985), 43–55. Phelps seems to have been a member of the firm from its inception in November 1831.

<sup>42</sup>This included acting as scribe and ghostwriter for Joseph Smith. For example, Phelps authored Smith's *Views of the Powers and Policy of the Government of the United States* (1844). See Phelps's letter to Brigham Young, 6 August 1863, MS, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>43</sup>*Deseret Almanac for the Year of Our Lord 1851* (Salt Lake City: W. Richards, [1851]), [2–3].

<sup>44</sup>*Deseret Almanac for the Year of Our Lord 1852* (Salt Lake City: W. Richards, [1852]). The last dated item in the almanac is December 1851; it would appear that the work was issued early in 1852.

<sup>45</sup>Phelps later complained to Brigham Young that William S. Godbe was giving other almanacs away at his store and that this competed with his own sales. See his letter to Young, 19 October 1865. See also his earlier comments in another letter to Young, 9 September 1856. The 1856 Almanac was printed for Godbe in New York City by the Graefenberg Company. A copy is in the LDS Church Archives. Both Phelps letters are in Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives. President Brigham Young himself ordered almanacs from England (see the 27 April 1854 notation in "European Mission Publication Accounts Journal," vol. 8, MS, 687, LDS Church Archives. The almanacs requested were the 1854 *Hannays Almanack* and the 1855 *Nautical Almanac*). In 1853 Mormon missionaries in India supplied their printers in Calcutta with a "list of the names and stations of the Elders throughout India. They intend inserting them in a almanac for the coming year" (A. Milton Musser, Journal, 2 August 1853 [vol. 3, 15], LDS Church Archives).

<sup>46</sup>Letter of Phelps to Brigham Young, 9 September 1856, MS, Young Collection, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>47</sup>See *Almanac for the Year 1860* (Salt Lake City: J. McKnight, 1860), 29. Given the material presented in n. 50 below, the 1858 almanac ought to have the greatest emphasis on astrology of all of the Phelps almanacs.

<sup>48</sup>Phelps, in a letter of 29 March 1866 to Brigham Young, said that he was going to combine 1866 and 1867 into one volume. In another letter dated 27 October 1866 he informed his leader that the volume was at press. MSS of both letters are in the Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives.

<sup>49</sup>*Deseret News*, 8 February 1851, 202.

<sup>50</sup>*Deseret News*, 8 March 1851, 219–20:

Again Doctor, I solicit a space in your columns, to say a few words upon 'the weather,' which is so wonderfully foretold by the almanac maker, or the printer's devil, in many almanacs, for the vexing consolation of farmers, travellers, and some visiting women. . . .

In addition to this kind of soothsaying, a large majority of mankind actually believe, that the moon holds an immense sway, at her changes, over the weather; and this serves to strengthen the almanac maker's or the printer's devil's faith, or cunning, or calculations, in foretelling the hidden treasures of the weather. . . .

I have witnessed more that six hundred changes of the moon in fifty years, during which time not less that ten thousand changes of weather have happened by night and by day, among which were snow in summer, and thunder showers in winter; and yet, before, and after all; when true philosophy, which is Truth, was consulted, I never found a man of this world, that knew what a day would bring forth, a year, a month, or a week ahead, unless revealed by the spirit of prophecy.

Phelps, of course, was not a farmer, and by 1857 changed his mind about astrology after a discussion with Brigham Young. After President Young told him that he believed astrology was true, Phelps wrote to Young, "I believe I did wrong in saying I did not know what astrology was . . . so I will now say astrology is one of the sciences belonging to the holy Priesthood perverted by vain man" (see Wilford Woodruff,



Journal, 28 June 1857, MS, LDS Church Archives; and letter of Phelps to Brigham Young, 29 June 18[57], MS, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives). By 1861, Brigham Young had changed his mind, suggesting that it would not do to favor astrology (see Brigham Young, Office Journal, 30 December 1861, MS, LDS Church Archives). Regardless of these fluctuations, it seems apparent that the average Mormon farmer probably took seriously the astrological content of almanacs. Brigham Young remembered an attempt to establish astrology in Nauvoo (see his Office Journal, under the date cited above). And Thomas Job wanted to establish a school for astrology in Salt Lake City (see letter of William Clayton to Brigham Young, 30 October 1865, MS, Young Collection, LDS Church Archives). The first known action of a Church court against "using magic and telling fortunes" resulted in a disfellowshipment, but those involved wrote from England to Nauvoo seeking to know if they had done the right thing (see letter of George A. Smith to Don Carlos Smith, 29 March 1841, in *Times and Seasons* 2 [1 June 1841]: 434. See also Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 28 March 1841. Compare a later case in Nauvoo High Council Minutes, 25 March 1843, MS, LDS Church Archives). The fact that members of the Church were open to astrology should not surprise us; they were also influenced by other cultural movements of the time, particularly spiritualism and phrenology. For an overview see Davis Bitton, "Mormonism's Encounter with Spiritualism," *Journal of Mormon History* 1 (1974): 39-50; and Gary L. Bunker and Davis Bitton, "Phrenology among the Mormons," *Dialogue* 9 (Spring 1974): 43-61. See also the editorials, "Astrology and Magic," *Millennial Star* 10 (15 February 1848): 50-52; and "Astrology and the 'Great Tribulation,'" *Deseret Evening News* (24 May 1879): 2.

<sup>51</sup>(1861; reprint, New York: A. A. Knopf, 1963), 279-80.

<sup>52</sup>2 vols. (London: W. Jeffs, 1861), 2:185-86.

<sup>53</sup>*Almanac for the Year 1860*, 32.

<sup>54</sup>A useful introduction is Leslie Shepard, *The History of Street Literature* (Newton, England: David and Charles, 1973). See also David B. Hall, "The World of Print and Collective Mentality in Seventeenth-Century New England," in John Higham and Paul K. Conklin, eds., *New Directions in American Intellectual History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 166-80.

<sup>55</sup>Orson Pratt's almanacs stressed the coming establishment of the kingdom of God spoken of by Daniel; William Phelps's almanacs reprinted a number of times the Civil War prophecy (D&C 87) in the 1860s, and, at least privately, he spoke in very strong millennial terms as to the fate of the nation. Phelps wrote and sent to Brigham Young several hymns that make his own thoughts clear on this matter. Copies are in the Young Collection, LDS Church Archives. In his *Almanac for the Year 1861*, Phelps included his own translations of verses from Daniel 4 and 12.

<sup>56</sup>On this aspect of the early American almanacs, see Richard M. Gummere, "The Classical Element in Early New England Almanacs," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 9 (Spring 1955): 181-96.

<sup>57</sup>A valuable look at another early Mormon who was a contemporary of both Pratt and Phelps and who also involved himself with astrology and alchemy is James B. Allen, *Trials of Discipleship: A Life of William Clayton* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986). See chap. 12, "The Esoteric Tendency," which addresses some of the same themes we are treating here. See also D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1987).

<sup>58</sup>Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 330. As Lewis Mumford has suggested, the invention of the mechanical clock meant that eternity would cease to serve as the measure and focus of human events. Clocks weakened God's supremacy because they superseded nature's authority. *Technics and Civilization* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1934), 14-16. This was called to my attention by Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (New York: Viking, 1985), 11-12.

<sup>59</sup>It should be stressed that folk culture is not just a thing of the past. It is still a real part of our world. A recent compilation of folk-sayings in Utah reminds us how pervasive folk culture and astrology still are, especially in agrarian settings in contemporary Utah (see Anthon S. Cannon et al., *Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from Utah* [Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985]; see the index for references to "moon." See also Wayland Hand, "Magic and Supernaturalism in Utah Folklore," *Dialogue* 16 [Winter 1983]: 51-64).



# Ritual Rising

for grandmother

Some sound in the house  
wakes you. The clock's face  
taunts: too late again, too late.

*five minutes to sit up*

You work knees to the edge,  
legs slant off—excruciating  
angle. Elbow as lever,  
you inch upward,  
pain flaming along nerves.

*three minutes to rest*

Everything fastens in front—adapted  
for frozen joints: nightgown, underclothes,  
dress. A carved mahogany arm  
reaches where you can't.

*twenty minutes to get them on,  
three to fold the gown under your pillow*

Grasping the forearm of the wheelchair,  
you rock forward, back  
three times. Lunge. Balance. Turn.  
Let yourself fall backward into fire.

Your daughter's voice comes, offering  
help. The clock chimes its impassive eight.  
The heave of your breath  
knives at your spine.

—Dixie Partridge



# Book Reviews

## Editor's Introduction

Paul H. Peterson

Juanita Brooks died on 26 August 1989 in St. George, Utah, at ninety-one years of age. I first heard of her during my student days at Brigham Young University when Dr. Eugene Campbell, in a Utah history class, described her book *The Mountain Meadows Massacre* as having heralded a new age of Mormon historiography. At the time, this comment meant little to me, but when Dr. Campbell said that Juanita would, on occasion, become so immersed in writing that she forgot to eat, I was impressed. At that period in my life, writing was an onerous burden (and to an extent will always be such), and I remember wondering how anyone could become so absorbed with writing as to lose track of mealtime.

A few weeks later, I had the privilege of meeting Juanita at the Church Historian's Office. It was in the old days when there were just two rectangular tables available for scholars on the third floor of the Church Administration Building on South Temple Street. The close quarters brought a kind of intimacy among researchers and made it possible for a novice like myself to work at the same table with a noted historian like Juanita Brooks. As I recall, I initiated the single exchange I had with her. I said I was writing a thesis on the historical development of the Word of Wisdom. In a firm but polite manner, she responded, "Well, young man, I think you ought to tell it like it was."

Juanita Brooks, of course, was noted for telling it like it was—even when the telling dealt with sensitive events such as Mountain Meadows or controversial people such as John D. Lee. But neither candor nor grit alone would have carried her so far along the path that, in retrospect, she seemed destined to follow. Her insatiable curiosity and determination were complemented by an uncanny ability to locate primary documents. She was a fine stylist who wrote with clarity, grace, and sympathy. Although she enjoyed



meaningful friendships with scholars of a naturalistic bent, she diverged sharply whenever their assessments tended to ignore or deny the divine. Indeed, her faithfulness was as remarkable as her feistiness. And while her scholarly achievements are obvious, they are no more notable than her domestic accomplishments. She was a devoted wife and mother who lived a life that can only be described as highly principled and morally upright. In short, Juanita Brooks had impressive credentials both as a historian and as a human being—credentials that were bound to be noted by some aspiring biographer.

Levi S. Peterson, a professor of English at Weber State College, first became interested in Juanita Brooks in 1973 and began writing her biography in 1985. It would seem that Peterson, who had won awards for his novels and short stories, successfully made the sometimes tricky transition from novelist to biographer. *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian* received the David W. and Beatrice C. Evans Award for biography in 1987, the Mormon History Association Best Book Award in 1988, and a special citation from the Association for Mormon Letters in 1989.

*BYU Studies* is committed not only to reviewing all important works that deal with the Mormon experience, but to giving special attention to works of unusual significance. In keeping with this policy, we invited three scholars to write review essays on *Juanita Brooks*. Newell G. Bringham, a professor of history at the College of the Sequoias, is currently compiling materials for a projected biography of Fawn M. Brodie. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, a research associate professor in the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at Brigham Young University, is completing a biography of Eliza R. Snow. Louis C. Midgley is a professor of political science at Brigham Young University and a critic of what some have called the “New Mormon History.”



LEVI S. PETERSON. *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988. xiv; 505 pp., bibliography and index. \$19.95.

Reviewed by Newell G. Bringham, professor of history at College of the Sequoias, Visalia, California.

It should be noted at the outset that Levi S. Peterson's *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian* has both its strengths and weaknesses. On the positive side, it is clear that Peterson, a professor of English at Weber State College, has produced an important work that for several reasons commands the attention of both scholars and interested students of Mormon studies. Juanita Brooks herself is noteworthy in that she was one of the most important historians to come out of the Utah Mormon tradition. Extremely prolific, she was the author of twelve books and several dozen articles and essays, and editor of four major diaries. Her seminal and perhaps most important work, *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, has gone through eight printings, sold some sixteen thousand copies, and is still in print. Brooks's role as a historian was further enhanced by the fact that over a period of several years she collected, copied, and preserved dozens of early Mormon pioneer diaries that would have otherwise been lost or destroyed.

In addition to the importance of its subject, Peterson's biography is valuable because in recounting Juanita Brooks's life and activities the author has provided a generous slice of twentieth-century Latter-day Saint history, a relatively neglected topic among Mormon studies. A third contribution is the work's focus on the so-called Dixie region of Mormon settlement (southwestern Utah and adjacent Nevada communities) as the setting for much of the action involving Brooks. This should serve to remind us anew that certain crucial developments affecting Mormonism occurred in regions away from the Wasatch Front.

A fourth outstanding contribution of this biography is that it conveys, with understanding and empathy, a keen sense of Brooks's personality and of what it must have been like to be a woman in Mormon country during the period from the early to late twentieth century. This is no small feat for a male writer with the courage (or audacity) to undertake a biography of a female subject. In probing Brooks's overall personality, Peterson presents her as "direct and uncomplicated" (x) but at the same time as an individual who "constantly desired challenge and creative expression" (114) and who was willing to stand up for what she believed despite the controversy or unpopularity of the cause.



Peterson portrays Juanita's childhood in Bunkerville, Nevada, with particular vividness. For example, he notes that until she was well into her teens she "wore in the summertime only a loose shift and panties sewn from flour sacks" (10). Also well presented are the varied triumphs, as well as tragedies, that marked Juanita's eventful life, including the early death of her first husband, Ernest Pulsipher, shortly after the birth of their first child. There is also a keen feeling of the complex, sometimes ambivalent, but generally loving and mutually supportive relationship that existed between Juanita and her second husband, Will Brooks, throughout the thirty-seven years they were together.

Peterson is also careful to take note of what Brooks herself considered the proper role of women. She was no advocate of women's liberation despite her own difficult yet successful effort at balancing her role as a homemaker and mother to eight children with her prolific research and writing activities. On one occasion, she "emphatically declared marriage to be the primary role of women," urging women to support their husbands "in every way" and to "share your children's interests and encourage them" (303). However, she was not absolute on this point, for on another occasion she "emphasized [the need for] professional achievement" outside of the home (309).

A fifth outstanding contribution of Peterson's biography is its vivid, detailed portrayal of Brooks's complex and changing relationship to the Church—in particular her role as a Mormon dissenter who remained faithful but who advocated change and reform from within. Hers was a faith frequently tested by curiosity, adversity, and sometimes moral outrage at what she considered improper behavior and actions of particular Church members, including certain leaders. As a teenager she was "a Sunday School dissenter," regarded by some townspeople "as verging on apostasy" (32). After the slow, painful death of her first husband, Juanita's faith, in the words of Peterson "would remain permanently sobered": "If she had not abandoned her belief in God, she at least had lost her confidence in his servants" (57). Brooks vigorously disagreed with the Church's support for the prosecution of "fundamentalist" (polygamous) Mormons, its policy of denying the priesthood to blacks, and its general indifference to historic preservation. In the wake of the destruction of the Coalville Tabernacle, she proclaimed that "my own faith in our present [Church] leaders is almost shattered" (368). In a larger sense, Brooks's intense dislike of Brigham Young strongly influenced her whole orientation as a historian and writer of Mormon history—a point most persuasively argued by Peterson. In the words of the



author, "The foremost issue between Juanita and the Church at large was the reputation of Brigham Young. . . . She in fact held a lifelong grudge against him for having sent her ancestors in an impoverished exile on the ragged edge of the Mormon empire" (246).

Brooks's role as a Mormon dissenter also involved her interaction with other like-minded individuals. These associations are carefully chronicled by Peterson, who asserts that "she became the nexus of an extensive Mormon underground" (5). During the course of her life, Brooks interacted with a wide variety of Mormon dissenters, beginning with Brigham Young University psychology professor Wilford Poulson, whom she met while a student during the 1920s. During the 1930s and 1940s, she became acquainted and developed close relationships with such notable dissenters as Nels Anderson, Dale L. Morgan, Charles Kelley, Maurine Whipple, and Fawn M. Brodie. Particularly significant was her relationship with Morgan, a noted writer-historian in his own right. Indeed, throughout the 1940s and 1950s Morgan was particularly helpful to Brooks, assuming a role as chief critic-mentor to the fledgling writer. Still later, during the 1960s, after moving from St. George to Salt Lake, Brooks involved herself with two dissenting Mormon groups: the "Swearing Elders" and the "Mormon Forum." Notable individuals involved with one or the other of these groups included Sterling McMurrin, William Mulder, Angus Woodbury, Judge Allen Crockett, and Brigham Madsen. According to Peterson, Brooks clearly "sensed her citizenship in an underground community of dissenting Mormons" (266).

Despite her dissent, Brooks remained steadfast in her Latter-day Saint faith. Indeed, one cannot help but be impressed by Peterson's clear and vivid presentation of her deep and continuing spirituality. This was clearly evident in a revealing exchange that took place between Brooks and Morgan in the wake of the publication of Fawn M. Brodie's *No Man Knows My History*. Brooks took strong exception to Brodie's basic thesis that Joseph Smith "was a conscious fraud and imposter," proclaiming to Morgan that "for a fraud, he inspired loyalties too deep in too many. Certainly he had SOMETHING. Men catching their spark from him, were willing to sacrifice too much to further his cause." She then cited her own spiritual experiences as reasons for believing in Joseph Smith's spiritual experiences, declaring, "I believe that it is possible for human beings to tap the great source of all good—to contact God direct, if you will" (170). On a later occasion, she told another dissenter, "Somehow I have always felt that a basic faith in God . . . gives depth and direction to life," adding that "I also think



that the basic teachings of Jesus Christ are worth trying to live, and the weekly pledge that I will try to keep His commandments that I may have His spirit to be with me is one that I am glad to make” (291). On still another occasion, she admitted to her eldest son, in the wake of his own disaffection from the Church, “that she herself had her reservations about [certain Mormon] doctrine and ritual” but went on to say that despite such imperfections it was important “to discern the valid from the invalid”: “Don’t throw out the child with the bath. In other words, seeing the dirty water that does get into the tub, don’t forget the living, vital truth that is also there. Save it, cherish it, and drain off all the unclean that you can” (343).

Also a part of Brooks’s basic spirituality was a sense of ecumenicalism. This is reflected in Peterson’s description of her impressions of several Catholic churches she saw while visiting Santa Fe, New Mexico. She noted: “In every one I had a deep sense of reverence—the feeling that these people are as sincere as we, trying to reach the same great SOURCE, but using different methods and symbols” (314). And when her son Ernest Pulsipher “became seriously attached to a woman who was not a Mormon” (who indeed was a Catholic), Brooks remarked, “All roads may lead to God if the person involved tries to find one,” adding, “You’re a Great Couple in my Book” (402). In summary, Peterson’s sensitive discussion of Brooks’s basic spirituality, combined with his overall presentation of the various other facets of her life, make this biography significant.

Despite its strengths, the book has some notable shortcomings that detract from its overall quality. Most serious is an apparent shortcoming in the basic structure and organization. This involves the author’s use of an extreme chronological framework in which he is apparently trying to present all the many and varied activities of Brooks in the exact order in which they occurred. Thus the account tends to read as if it were a day-by-day journal or diary that all too frequently intermixes the seemingly insignificant (and indeed at times the trite) with those events that were notable and crucial. This technique works well when the narrative is concerned with certain dramatic events such as the controversy involving a test of wills between Brooks and Latter-day Saint leaders over the status of John D. Lee—specifically whether or not to publicize the Church’s 1961 decision to restore Lee posthumously to full fellowship. But such dramatic events are few and far between, and not enough to make this form of organization effective throughout the course of the entire biography. Instead, Peterson’s detailed, hodgepodge narrative seems to preclude or get in the way of any systematic effort at critical



analysis. As a result, the individual chapters are not clearly focused, and, indeed, the biography as a whole lacks a clear theme or overarching interpretive focus.

There are other stylistic problems. Peterson is too didactic in his basic presentation. That is, he assumes the awkward role of direct critic. Thus the author critiques Brooks's varied works, venturing his own opinions as to which ones are good, bad, or indifferent. Such an approach would be appropriate in a work of literary criticism, but it seems out of place, and at times heavy-handed, in a work that purports to be the definitive biography of the subject in question. For example, Peterson boldly proclaims that "*The History of the Jews in Utah and Idaho* was indeed Juanita's worst book," going on to note that "in it she offered a welter of trivial facts . . . failed to characterize the Jews methodically . . . was careless with transitions," and concludes that "her style was pedestrian and repetitious [and] failed utterly of verve and elegance" (386). If such an evaluation had come from someone other than Peterson himself and had been quoted or paraphrased by him, it would have been a most effective means of presenting the author's own feelings concerning this book. But coming from Peterson himself, its effectiveness is severely diminished, and, instead, the author's comments come across as inappropriate and at times hypercritical.

A third major stylistic problem is Peterson's tendency to be overly pedantic. This is evident when he describes in excessive detail the contents and basic story line in the various works authored by Brooks. Particularly disconcerting, and indeed repetitive, are the detailed descriptions of those books that Brooks wrote about various members of her own family: her grandfather Dudley Leavitt, her husband Will Brooks, and especially her own autobiography, *Quicksand and Cactus*. Peterson draws on this work in reconstructing the events of Brooks's early life, then midway through the book details many of these same events in describing Brooks's initial efforts to write her autobiography during the 1940s, and then toward the end of the biography relates some of the same events a third time in illustrating how they make their way into the final draft of *Quicksand and Cactus* as written by Brooks during the late 1970s. Peterson's pedantic tendencies are also evident in his speculative statements about what might have happened in specific situations for which historical documentation is minimal or completely lacking. His tendency to always start off such speculative statements with "one imagines" and then conjecture what might have happened is also disturbing at times. For example, in describing a Dutch-oven cookout hosted by



Juanita and Will Brooks on the Sugar Loaf for LeRoy and Ann Hafen, Peterson speculates, "One imagines hot biscuits and fried chicken, a moon in a balmy sky, and the twinkling lights of the town below" (126).

Besides such stylistic problems, Peterson's biography leaves unanswered a number of questions concerning certain crucial aspects of Brooks's life. For example, one wonders about the precise nature and implications of Brooks's apparently less than ideal relationship with her eldest son, Ernest Pulsipher. While the author emphasizes the close, loving relationship that Brooks maintained with her other children (including her stepchildren from Will Brooks's first marriage), he is rather vague in discussing what was apparently a somewhat more distant relationship between Juanita and Ernest. Indeed, at two different periods while Ernest was growing up he did not even live with his mother. Peterson does not concern himself with the varied implications of this situation—that is, how it affected Brooks in her attitudes and behavior as a mother and writer.

Peterson also arouses, without satisfying, curiosity concerning Juanita Brooks's precise attitudes toward sex and her own basic sexuality. On the one hand, her position would seem clear, especially in light of her candid statement made shortly after her marriage to Will Brooks: "I think that of all things in the world sex gratification is the least satisfying. It leaves not even a memory that is pleasant; in fact it can't be enjoyed in anticipation or retrospect at all. For a few seconds there is a type of excitement and that is all. It's not even especially pleasant" (91). Peterson's discussion of these negative feelings is somewhat confusing in light of the fact that she and Will went on to have four children within the short space of just five years. Indeed, so many children in such a short period of time caused concern among the older children, with one son remarking, "Now look here, Mom, the town is starting to talk about when you and Dad are going to stop having kids. It is becoming almost a scandal. We hear whispers everywhere we go" (112).

A third question relative to Juanita Brooks's behavior concerns her basic political attitudes. What factor (or factors) made her a strong, lifelong Democrat? Peterson does not provide any explanation.

Finally, one is left wondering why Juanita Brooks had such a deep sense of personal inferiority. Peterson takes note of this time and again throughout his narrative, noting that she not only felt inadequate about her personal appearance but also, and more importantly, about her abilities as a historian-writer. This is a



perplexing issue, especially in light of her significant and varied successes as an author-historian, a wife-mother, an involved citizen of the community, and a committed member of her church. Her physical appearance, moreover, while admittedly somewhat plain, was certainly not unattractive. Indeed, she projected a certain dignified presence, particularly during her later years. Peterson himself offers little explanation on this point.

Despite its varied problems, however, *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian* is one of the most important works yet written dealing with twentieth-century developments affecting The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. While a notable achievement in and of itself, the book is as much if not more a tribute to its subject, the late Juanita Brooks, who has with good reason been characterized "the dean of Utah historians" (411). As such it is essential reading for all students of twentieth-century Mormon studies.

LEVI S. PETERSON. *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988. xiv; 505 pp., bibliography and index. \$19.95.

Reviewed by Maureen U. Beecher, research associate professor in the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at Brigham Young University.

"I couldn't lay the book down" is usually said of a Dorothy Sayers mystery or a John LeCarré novel. But Levi Peterson's recent biography *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian* held me in just such a grip. It may be that having known Juanita, having read most of her books, having traveled around Dixie with her, and having lived in her "U" Street house, guaranteed my enthusiasm for her story. But I have struggled through competent biographies of other people I have known and respected and been left with no more memory than the flavor of blancmange. Peterson's book, in contrast, tasted good from first to last, and left me hungering for more. It is, in Thoreau's model, "a simple and sincere account" of one person's life, differing from Thoreau's ideal only in that it was not Juanita herself who wrote it.

One might accurately label this "one-damn-thing-after-another" biography, a narration that follows detail after chronological detail. Yet it works. The composite effect of 423 pages of Juanita Brooks's life, told in the gentle, controlled prose of a master



stylist, is awesome. Day by well-filled day, Peterson recreates for us the life of this many-faceted woman, the details building one upon another, the common and the uncommon mingling in a tapestry of rich but well-aged colors.

Peterson's sources, those he found and those he created, are a biographer's dream: a full file of incoming and outgoing letters; diaries of his subject and her husband; and interviews with immediate family members, friends and professional associates still living. Juanita's own attempt at an autobiography, published in 1982 as *Quicksand and Cactus*, had made available some of her most colorful stories, though for the most part Peterson resisted the temptation to repeat the twice-told tales. Brooks's own letters, with all the immediacy and intimacy of the form, are the mother lode from which Peterson drew his best insights, and his quotations from her and, in reply, from her correspondents, are moments of pure gold. The letters to and from Dale Morgan, for example, are illuminating not only of their relationship, but of the issues in the air at each stage of Juanita's career: the shifting vogue among publishers, the highs and lows of Church and popular acceptance, each new discovery on a given project, and her own insecurity as a lamb among the wolves of the academy. These Peterson has well illustrated from that correspondence.

Seldom have subject and author been so well paired as here. Levi Peterson's love affair with Juanita Brooks is a tender one, enhanced by their shared experience. Both were born Latter-day Saints on "the ragged edge" of civilized Mormondom. Both were educated beyond the expectations of their community. Both felt the disapproval of the group for their maverick ways, straying as they did into realms of mind beyond the borders of orthodoxy. But both were undergirded in their wanderings by a persistent core of faith that supported them. Their Mormon past nurtured them, sustained them, and exemplified for them the value of life on the frontier, geographical or spiritual. It was right that Levi should become Juanita's biographer; he has, by his own avowal, long been her brother.

As she has unknowingly been sister to many others. Unconsciously Juanita Brooks was a model to the generation of bright and questing women who followed her. She "did it all"—family, church, career—without ever losing the perspective of any of it. When Claudia Bushman asked her to address the budding feminists of the 1970s for *Dialogue*, she replied in the only way she could—by telling stories from her own life. She didn't know the issues, nor would it have made a difference had she been afflicted with the "raised consciousness" of the next generation. And Levi, in writing



her life, reflects her innocence; he, too, seems unaffected by the women's movement that swirls around us all. But he acknowledges the individual woman for her achievement, and that, as the kids would say, is where it's at.

There is no doubting the importance of Juanita Brooks to Utah and Mormon history. George Ellsworth once crowned her "the queen of Utah historians." Her 1950 *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, answering with rigorous accuracy and human compassion the questions long buried beneath the surface of Mormon shame, set new standards for Mormon scholars. As Dale Morgan predicted it would, the book served "to shape, even as it now expresses, the social force that will bring about" a new course in Mormon historiography. Though she found among the angry young Mormon writers of the 1940s camaraderie in her demand for objectivity, unlike them Brooks maintained a fierce loyalty to the Church and the people who birthed and nurtured her. In that she became a model for a new generation of Mormon intellectuals, firm in the faith and determined to discover a real and accessible past.

Juanita was an original, a lone cowpoke riding the edge of the herd, whistling her own tune. That the herd listened, and moved accordingly, is witnessed by the burst of Mormon studies since *Mountain Meadows Massacre* and its contemporaries that have adhered to, and surpassed, their standard of historical integrity. Without the association that links today's Mormon scholars in the sharing of methods, insights, and documents, Brooks scoured the Southwest for source materials locked in family trunks and challenged the guardians at the gate of the Church's collections for those papers she knew were there. Peterson's image of the small-framed woman sitting obdurately outside the office of some Church leader remains after the details of the confrontation are blurred.

Peterson's re-creation of the professional life of a determined and ambitious woman is complete and convincing. If I could wish one widening of the dimension in which he depicted Juanita, it would be a clearer revelation of the feminine aspects of her nature. Peterson is careful to point out that the pinnacle of her value structure was her wife-and-motherhood, but her own record, and his subsequent sources, did not reveal in sufficient or consistent detail those moments when the feminine asserts its supremacy—the female rituals of life and living. How did she respond to the birthing of her babies and the fears and the joys of their every new learning? To the quiet conversations with her daughter, her mother, her sisters in spirit? To her successes and failures in the day-to-day workings of her household, or the neighborhood, or the Relief



Society? To those moments of intimate communion with the Spirit? For those lacunae I cannot fault Levi—I myself asked Juanita about such things and received little of substance in reply. In the things that mattered most, Juanita was a very private person. It's possible that even her children could not have described those hidden parts of her life.

The book, and Juanita Brooks's life, raise for our time and place the imponderable question once posed by Virginia Woolf: what if Shakespeare's sister had had his genius? Peterson touches on the issue when he subtitles the book "*Mormon Woman Historian*." What if Juanita Brooks had been a man? Certainly we would then have lost some of the most delicious moments of her story, for would a man feel he had to disguise his scholarship by tossing a cloth over the typewriter and plugging in the iron when visitors arrived? Would a man have had to write at midnight, and been so engrossed as to have forgotten the baby asleep outside? Or would he have habitually taken the midnight bus home from a research junket in order to arrive in time to serve breakfast to his well-rested family? Or been content to work in a corner of the kitchen? Will Brooks recognized his wife's exceptional abilities, her sense of mission. Others, he reminded her, could wash dishes and scrub floors; only she could write her books. But her neighbors lacked this perspective, and she bought their definition of her role as well as her own, and accomplished both. If Shakespeare had been a woman, would we have had all that treasure? If Juanita Brooks had been a man, what more might we have had from her? Or was there in the tension between her two worlds an energy that gave momentum to both? On the other hand, what if Will Brooks had not been the provider he was? Or what if *he* had had her gifts, her calling to research and write? The imponderables . . .

But let us give thanks for what is here portrayed of this life well lived. I, and many of my sex and of the other sex, find example, direction, and validation in the struggles and triumphs of Juanita Brooks. And thank Levi Peterson for mirroring them so tenderly and gracefully.



LEVI S. PETERSON. *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988. xiv; 505 pp., bibliography and index. \$19.95.

Reviewed by Louis C. Midgley, professor of political science at Brigham Young University.

Juanita Brooks was apparently destined to be a rather ordinary Mormon housewife, but the untimely death of her first husband soon after their marriage led her into teaching. Then a second marriage facilitated the fulfillment of her literary ambitions. She became a sleuth busy collecting lore and then an amateur historian of southwestern Utah who earned the esteem of professional historians.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the tales Levi S. Peterson usually tells,<sup>2</sup> *Juanita Brooks* is archivally grounded documentary realism. Hence much detail concerning Brooks's activities and those of her "cultural Mormon" associates can be gleaned from this prize-winning biography, which is clearly the fruit of an intense infatuation verging on an obsession.

Though Peterson's strong point is fiction, *Juanita Brooks* is at times wearisome reading. Everything about Brooks seems to have been included. There is little winnowing of the mass of materials on her, even when they do not contribute to our understanding of Brooks or her times. Episodes tend to appear chronologically, but often without meaningful transitions. For example, one paragraph is as follows:

On the last Saturday in July [1962], Juanita and Will [Brooks] attended the Mormon Forum [as was previously explained (269–70), this was a group of Mormon dissidents including Brigham Madsen, Ray Canning, LaMar Peterson, and John Fitzgerald] at the summer cabin of Angus and Grace Woodbury in Mill Creek Canyon. Grace, always waggish, suggested that the beer drinkers in the group toss their empty cans onto the tennis court of the next-door neighbor, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith. Good taste prevailed and no one disposed of cans in this manner. On a Sunday in August the Brooks family provided the program at Sacrament Meeting in their new ward.

Then follow some details about the family participation in that meeting before we learn that Brooks attended, on the following Wednesday, a luncheon honoring Russell Mortensen, who was "to become director of the University of Utah Press" (277).

Unless Brooks was one of the beer drinkers, why is that tale included? The source for the yarn about the beer drinkers is Ray Canning—not known for sympathy towards the Church—who told the story to Peterson twenty-four years after the event is



alleged to have taken place. If it is true that without a text there can be no history, it is also true that there are ways around that inconvenience. Conversations many years later can take up the slack, and Peterson has sometimes taken advantage of such a luxury in fashioning his account of Brooks.

This paragraph illustrates another feature of *Juanita Brooks*. A menagerie of figures on the fringes of the LDS church make their appearance on the stage Peterson has created for his drama, including, for example, A. C. Lambert, Melvin T. Smith, Stanley Ivins, Harold Bentley, and M. Wilford Poulson—even Sterling M. McMurrin and the “Mormon Seminar” (or what would come to be called the “Swearing Elders”) make a cameo appearance (214–15). A few of the Church leaders (for example, Elders Stephen L. Richards, Delbert L. Stapley, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., LeGrand Richards, and David O. McKay) also appear, but the ordinary, faithful Latter-day Saints Brooks knew and lived among, including the bishops and stake presidents who served with her when she was stake Relief Society president in St. George for seven years, appear on Peterson’s stage only as anonymous, faceless spear-carriers. In general, they are portrayed as either thoughtless, parochial believers or representatives of stifling Church authority.

It is true that from her earliest efforts as an amateur historian, Brooks came into contact with dissidents on the fringes of the Mormon community, including initially Dale L. Morgan and Fawn M. Brodie. Even though she spurned their efforts to fashion plausible naturalistic accounts of Joseph Smith’s prophetic claims, her association with such people furnishes Peterson with the polemical nexus for his book. It also provides him with the ground for the two myths he advances: that Juanita Brooks was a powerful symbol of dissent, which he wishes to celebrate and promote, and that she was highly influential in Mormon society.

When he labels Brooks a dissenter, Peterson does not seem to have in mind her willingness to disagree, or her self-assurance or independence, or even her misgivings about inane lesson materials prescribed for teaching situations in the Church or the vapid instruction that may occur. What he means by dissent seems to be exemplified by those cultural Mormons who reject the historical foundations of the faith and who are essentially hostile to the Church. He strives to turn Brooks into an archetypal and heroic “Mormon dissenter,” even though she was what others have correctly described as “a devout Latter-day Saint”<sup>3</sup> who approached the world with the convictions and also the conventional morality of a primitive believer. Though Peterson describes the many signs of what he pictures as naive piety in Brooks, they



are for him unfortunate, and he parts company with his heroine when he finds her telling of the charismatic gifts and miracles that she witnessed. From his perspective, these indications of her faith were the remnants of a primitive credulity she never managed to outgrow. Peterson is interested in celebrating Juanita Brooks as a dissenter and not as a faithful Latter-day Saint.<sup>4</sup>

It is not surprising, given Peterson's agenda, that he is vague about what constitutes dissent. He never looks carefully into the varieties of dissent. He makes no effort to distinguish dissent directed against the host of evils, illusions, or trivia of this world, or disagreements within the faith, which may be quite legitimate and even healthy, from dissent directed against the Church and its teachings and against God. So we are never quite sure in which context or setting and against what it is that Brooks can be appropriately described as a dissenter. She developed a different, more complex understanding of John D. Lee and the Mountain Meadows Massacre than was common among the Saints. The reason for considering her a "dissenter" seems to be that she looked into some obscure, embarrassing incidents and came up with accounts that differed from previous understandings. But it would have been the fate of anyone who cared sufficiently to look into such matters to end up debunking the residual ignorance.

At the time Brooks was doing this research, some Church leaders evidently preferred not to have the old quarrels that still infect Utah's "Dixie" agitated once again. On that issue she held a different opinion, even while she remained a primitive believer. Her positions on such matters are even less crucial to the truth of the Restoration than a difference of opinion over whether the "Garden Tomb" is the actual site of the resurrection of Jesus, or a host of other similar questions over which the Saints may disagree. Peterson neglects to address the question of why he should label a devout Latter-day Saint a dissenter. Is one a dissenter if one finds reasons for doubting some folklore about ultimately insignificant persons and events, or if one is troubled by some aspect of the culture? Some measure of disagreement over the details of Mormon culture, as distinguished from the gospel of Jesus Christ, is the fate of thoughtful Latter-day Saints including even the Brethren. Nor was Brooks the first or anywhere near the best critic of Mormon culture.

Being the champion of radical dissent against the faith, Peterson lacks the distance from his image of Brooks to assess the crucial episodes in her life dispassionately and accurately. If he is correct, the Brethren were unwilling to assist Brooks in furthering her literary ambitions; they were, of course, also unwilling to



endorse her historical accounts, even though they may never have bothered to get clear on what they were. Peterson finds nothing astonishing in Brooks's notion that her account of John D. Lee and the Mountain Meadows Massacre needed Church endorsement. She seems to have insisted on getting either the endorsement of the Brethren for her views or their hostility. When the Brethren did not lash out at her, as her cultural Mormon friends expected or hoped they would, she may have been disappointed. She and her friends assumed that Church leaders had rejected the "truth" about the past that she felt she had uncovered. But the Brethren seem to have been indifferent to the history done by Brooks. Peterson does not ask why that is so. Instead, he reports gossip from her friends about the possibility of her being excommunicated, though they never articulated actionable charges. In that way he allows unfounded rumors to constitute reality. He is not inclined to examine the little conceits, ambitions, pettiness, and vanity that were never entirely absent from his heroine and that seem to have grown as her sentiments were corroded by the constant flattery of ideologues critical of the Church. But a thoughtful reading of Peterson's account makes all of that quite obvious.

Nor does Peterson notice that there is something odd about the way Brooks dealt with Church leaders. First, she adopted the stereotype of the Brethren provided by her cultural Mormon friends, who saw them as opposed to the truth being told about the Mormon past. Second, though Peterson praises the honesty of Brooks, he admits that her perception of Church leaders induced her to "dissemble"—his cautious word for "lie"—when she sought their assistance and endorsement. She seemed to act on the premise that, when dealing with an Apostle, a lie is at times better than the truth. Might Brooks have gotten more of what she wanted if she had simply told the truth?

The whole question of dissent could have been considered or presented in such a way as to allow the narrative to rest on a more evenhanded understanding of the larger context of Juanita Brooks's conscious separation from Morgan and Brodie on the crucial fundamental issues. Given Morgan's claim that he and Brodie were on one side of a "Great Divide" that separates the believers from the unbelievers, and Brooks was on the other, why would it not be appropriate to examine why Brooks stood, as she did, on the side of faith against those who operate from the other side of that Great Divide? One striking thing about Brooks was that she was able to maintain her standing among the faithful while being subjected to the flattery, arguments, and clever rhetoric of Morgan and Brodie and the endless parade of gossip about Mormon



things that filled the life of the cultural Mormons with whom she came in contact. She could refuse to accept much of their constant anti-Mormon haranguing and still remain on friendly terms with them. With a faith grounded in encounters with the divine, she was more or less able to withstand some of the corrosive effects of the hostility of her friends to spiritual matters.

Peterson's emphasis on Brooks's supposed influence must be understood as the corollary of his effort to turn her into a heroic symbol of dissent. He both begins and ends *Juanita Brooks* with that theme (3–6; 422–23), and it is inserted elsewhere in the book (for example, 169–72, 204, 243, 266–69), as well as in a series of related essays.<sup>5</sup> “Few persons,” he asserts, “outside the central hierarchy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have had a more significant influence upon Mormon society than Juanita. The details of that influence, I hope, will be evident in my book.”<sup>6</sup> But nothing in Peterson's book shows that Brooks was especially influential in Mormon society—not even with Mormon dissidents, for whom she was merely an example of an essentially harmless historian they liked to picture as threatened by authoritarian bigotry. At most she was a colorful figure, but of little influence in the Church. Her cultural Mormon friends seem to have convinced her that the Brethren would loathe her work; they conjured a picture of a malevolent church intent on harming a truth-telling historian. They imagined that Brooks was struggling against a community they believed to be founded on lies and shielded by cunning leaders. Something like that scenario also seems to constitute Peterson's stereotype of the Church. Hence he makes much of the brief encounters Brooks had with a few of the leaders of the Church. These encounters are crucial to his thesis, but his treatments of them are among the least satisfactory portions of his book, for he has made no effort to probe for information that might have helped explain the stance taken by the Brethren, nor has he asked whether other assessments of those incidents might be possible, even if we assume that Brooks got the details straight.

Peterson prefers to cast Brooks as a heroic dissident who was the leader of an “informal network of intelligent Saints” striving for an “enlightened religion” in “defiance of ecclesiastic regimentation,” thus battling the authoritarian power, superstition, and historical myths of a community badly in need of being civilized at the hands of dissenters. This is itself a myth of no small proportions, which needs some demythologizing.

In a 1968 essay, Fawn M. Brodie opined that the leaders of the Church must realize—“as Jewish leadership did long ago—that if



it is to keep its intellectuals it must eliminate its constant testing for signs of apostasy. It must find a way to embrace the doubters along with the faithful—with respect as well as compassion. Otherwise it will never keep ‘the chosen people’ intact.” For Brodie and now Peterson, being an intellectual presupposes not being a believer:

Let me say at the outset—though many Mormons will not agree with me—that to qualify as an intellectual a Mormon must reject the divinity of the golden plates and the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. If he accepts either as a divinely inspired historical document he is not an intellectual but a sentimentalist. Once a Mormon resolutely faces up to the mundane origin of these holy books . . . then it matters very little whether he concludes that Joseph Smith was a paranoid, a charlatan, or a profound religious mystic. The important decision the Mormon intellectual makes is that Joseph Smith was not talking to God.<sup>7</sup>

In this view, the dissent of so-called “intellectuals” is based on a rejection of the foundations of the faith. Such question-begging attempts to charter dissent by celebrating the intellectual superiority of the liberated dissenter have been a rather typical ploy of those anxious to rid the Church of those features that make of it a community of faith and memory. For such people, the Church is a social club in which they may want to participate, but on their terms. Brodie described the plight of these cultural Mormons “who have abandoned the faith if not the faithful.” They long for a brotherhood in which they can share “wry Mormon stories, similar feelings of guilt, exasperation, and liberation” as they unburden themselves on “the problems imposed by a still faithful wife, or husband, or still devout children,” or renounce the evils of what they see as a parochial culture dominated by a stultifying, authoritarian church.

Peterson is sincere in casting himself among the “Mormon intellectuals” as defined by Brodie: those equipped with “an alert, active, and questioning intelligence,” those “curious and adventurous” whose “respect for reason” is such that they “base their convictions upon evidence and logic.” Such people may be seen as caught in an unhappy “state of spiritual estrangement from an organization that, for emotional reasons, they cannot abandon.” Much like Brodie, Peterson feels that

Mormon intellectuals do not lead an enviable life. Often they sense keenly the distance between themselves and the rest of the Church. Isolated from one another, they may suffer guilt and doubt; at times they may well wonder whether their evolving values, seemingly unpalatable to other Mormons, are not perverse or insane. For this reason, it is important that they form their own communities, both for comfort and for enhancing their effectiveness as agents of change.<sup>8</sup>



In generating the myth of Brooks as a Mormon dissenter, Peterson appears to have furthered, if not exactly initiated, a new brand of Mormon apologetic hagiography. Unlike some of the earlier idealizing biographies of the Brethren that critics denigrate as "faith-promoting," this new hagiography centers on Mormon historians (or on litterateurs who have dabbled in Mormon history), and it is also "faith-promoting," but it promotes a fundamentally secular faith. Gary Topping's review of *Juanita Brooks* celebrates it as part of a flowering of "Mormon historiography,"<sup>9</sup> which for him includes the publication of Morgan's fragmentary effort to fashion a plausible naturalistic account of Joseph Smith's prophetic claims,<sup>10</sup> a scanty assessment of Mormon historians by Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington,<sup>11</sup> even the publication of materials on and by Bernard DeVoto (a non-Mormon critic of Mormon things), and finally "the happy news that Newell Bringhurst is preparing a biography of Fawn Brodie."<sup>12</sup> The thread that presumably ties this bizarre list of books to *Juanita Brooks* is what Topping labels "liberal Mormonism."

*Juanita Brooks*, like biographies generally, is an interpretation and at crucial points tends towards veiled autobiography.<sup>13</sup> Precisely because the book is the fruit of deep passions, it lacks symmetry; it reflects its author's sentiments and ideology too much, and the ideology provides the plot and generates the picture presented by Peterson. To begin to understand the rich complexities and anomalies surrounding Juanita Brooks, it is necessary to discount the sentiments and certain of the biases that animate the account provided by Peterson, especially his enthusiasm for what he calls the "liberalization of Mormonism."<sup>14</sup>

Nevertheless, if we are aware of its controlling ideology, the book can teach us about the past and about the present, though the lessons it teaches may not be exactly those its author had in mind. Juanita Brooks was an independently minded, bright, amateur historian and essayist; before the unfortunate waning of her powers stripped her of her gifts, her discipline and perseverance produced some fine books on individuals and episodes connected with Utah's "Dixie," as well as editions of texts relating to those matters. But Brooks was also a conventionally devout, moralistic Latter-day Saint. In none of her writings did she touch upon the deeper issues raised by the prophetic claims of Joseph Smith. Those claims and certain of their implications, which she accepted at face value, at least partly because of experiences that she firmly held to be genuinely charismatic, served as an anchor for her life in the face of the best arguments that her cultural Mormon associates such as Morgan and Brodie could mount against the faith. These



experiences, coupled to an attachment to the Church in which she was raised, served for Brooks as the justification for her place in the Church and for her services to the community of Saints. Peterson praises Brooks "for the ability to reconcile faith and critical reason" (423) but pictures her as "a complex mixture of the critical and the credulous" (36). That kind of formulation allows him to imply that the critical, which presumably includes dissent, is somehow separable from and clearly superior to faith, which for him appears to be merely a manifestation of credulity.

For Peterson to have striven to cast Brooks in his own ideological mold is a disservice to her, and to his readers, whatever else might be said about his valuable service in making available a store of details about her and her associates. The distance between his subject and his own position is greater than he is willing to admit. The emotional intensity of his attachment to Brooks may wrongly persuade his readers that he has gotten clear on the central theme of his book. The qualities manifest by Brooks are not consonant with the radical dissent advocated by Peterson that spurns the core of the Restoration.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Her reputation rests on two books: *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, 2d ed., with a new preface (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970); and *John Doyle Lee: Zealot, Pioneer Builder, Scapegoat* (Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers, 1984). For a fine assessment, see Thomas G. Alexander, "Toward the New Mormon History: An Examination of the Literature on the Latter-day Saints in the Far West," in *Historians and the American West*, ed. Michael P. Malone (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 353-54.

<sup>2</sup>Including a novel entitled *The Backslider* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1986) and a collection of short stories entitled *The Canyons of Grace: Stories* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

<sup>3</sup>Alexander, "Toward the New Mormon History," 353.

<sup>4</sup>For a concise statement of Peterson's understanding of Brooks, uncluttered by the pedestrian details of her life, see "Juanita Brooks as a Mormon Dissenter," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 8 (1988): 13-29.

<sup>5</sup>Much of Peterson's nonfictional writing has been devoted to Brooks. In addition to the essay mentioned above, see "Juanita Brooks: The Mormon Historian as Tragedian," *Journal of Mormon History* 3 (1976): 47-54; "Juanita Brooks's *Quicksand and Cactus*: The Evolution of a Literary Memoir," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Spring 1987): 145-55; and "Juanita Brooks, My Subject, My Sister," *Dialogue* 22 (Spring 1989): 16-28.

<sup>6</sup>Peterson, "Juanita Brooks: My Subject, My Sister," 16.

<sup>7</sup>This and the following quotations are taken from Fawn M. Brodie, "The Mormon Intellectual," an essay commissioned by a magazine entitled *Western Review: A Journal of Humanities* in 1968, but never published.

<sup>8</sup>Levi S. Peterson, "The Civilizing of Mormondom," *Sunstone* 7 (May-June 1982): 15.

<sup>9</sup>Gary Topping, "Mormon Woman Historian," *Dialogue* 22 (Summer 1989): 141-42.

<sup>10</sup>John Phillip Walker, ed., *Dale Morgan on Early Mormonism: Correspondence and a New History* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1986). Topping heaped lavish praise on this volume in "Dale Morgan's Unfinished Mormon History," *Dialogue* 20 (Spring 1987): 173-74.



<sup>11</sup>Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988). In "History of Historians," *Dialogue* 22 (Spring 1989): 156–58, Topping faults this volume because of the false assumption that "the rise of a scientific, objective Mormon historiography began, according to the authors, barely thirty years ago," an assumption that slights "the agents of that reorientation, Bernard DeVoto, Fawn Brodie, Dale Morgan, and Juanita Brooks." Talk about scientific, objective, or naturalistic history, by Bitton and Arrington or by Topping and others, does not confront crucial intellectual issues, but is, instead, part of a mythology being invoked in the political struggle going on over control of the Mormon past within the Mormon history profession. Celebratory biographical treatments of Mormon historians are a new feature in this struggle. For a fine treatment of the political dimensions of professionalized history, some of which are closely matched by developments in Mormon historiography since World War II, see Peter Novick's *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>12</sup>Topping, "Mormon Woman Historian," 141. Bringhurst has begun to publish portions of this work. See his "Fawn Brodie and Her Quest for Independence," *Dialogue* 22 (Summer 1989): 79–95; and also his "Applause, Attack, and Ambivalence—Varied Responses to Fawn M. Brodie's *No Man Knows My History*," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 57 (Winter 1989): 46–63.

<sup>13</sup>This is made clear in "Juanita Brooks: My Subject, My Sister."

<sup>14</sup>"Juanita Brooks as a Mormon Dissenter," 29.



## Poem for Thomas Morgan (after attending a temple session)

Since this morning, Thomas Morgan,  
When I stood and spoke your words  
I have been wondering about your children  
In the quiet, gentle dusk—

Did you hold them on your knee?

Did pleasure kindle in your wife  
To hear you speak her name, unplanned?

What subtle tuggings were the sweetest to your soul?  
What baubles lingered longest in your hand?

Did you chill with joy  
When light and water glowed and tangled in your sight?

How often did you pause to see the fields of grain  
Bend lovely in the wind  
Or watch small birds in tufted flight?

Ah, Thomas Morgan,  
I have been wondering

What did you see, or sense, or say  
When I stood in white and spoke for you today?

—Randall L. Hall



# Index

Volume 29, Numbers 1–4

Compiled by Gary P. Gillum, Senior Librarian  
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## AUTHORS

- Albrecht, Stan L., "The Consequential Dimension of Mormon Religiosity," 2:57
- Alexander, Thomas G., "Afterwords," 4:143; Review: Firmage, Edwin Brown, and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900*, 3:124
- Allen, A. Lester, "Science and Theology: A Search for the Uncommon Denominator," 3:71
- Anderson, A. Gary, Review: Orton, Chad M., *More Faith than Fear: The Los Angeles Stake Story*, 2:109
- Beecher, Maureen U., Review: Peterson, Levi S., *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*, 4:123
- Bringhurst, Newell G., Review: Peterson, Levi S., *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*, 4:117
- Buchanan, Frederick S., "Robert Lang Campbell: 'A Wise Scribe in Israel' and Schoolman to the Saints," 3:5
- Bullinger, Cara M., "Death of a Daughter," a poem, 4:142
- Christianson, James R., "Humanity and Practical Christianity: Implications for a Worldwide Church," 1:35
- Clark, Dennis, "Bread and Water," a poem, 1:34
- Crawley, Peter, "Constitution of the State of Deseret," 4:7
- D'Arc, James V., "Darryl F. Zanuck's *Brigham Young: A Film in Context*," 1:5
- Davies, John, "Snow," a poem, 1:66
- Devitry-Smith, John, "The Wreck of the *Julia Ann*," 2:5
- Duvall, Scott H., "Mormon Bibliography 1988," 3:79
- England, Eugene, "Perfection and Progression: Two Complementary Ways to Talk about God," 3:31
- Gillum, Gary P., "Index, Volume 29, Numbers 1–4," 4:137
- Godfrey, Kenneth W., "The Zelph Story," 2:31
- Griggs, C. Wilfred, "Early British Christianity," 1:47
- Hall, Randall L., "The Apogee of Loneliness," a poem, 4:136; Review: Morris, Larry E., *Edge of the Reservoir*, 2:111
- Harris, John S., "Hotblood," a poem, 3:69



- Hart, Edward L., "Unconquerable," a poem, 2:128
- Howe, Susan, "The Paleontologist with an Ear Infection," a poem, 2:30
- Jackson, Fleda B., "The Route We Take," a poem, 3:28
- Liu, Timothy, "Nanking," a poem, 3:48
- Lyman, Edward Leo, "The Rise and Decline of Mormon San Bernardino," 4:43
- Midgley, Louis C., Review: Peterson, Levi S., *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*, 4:127
- Millet, Robert L., "Joseph Smith and Modern Mormonism: Orthodoxy, Neoorthodoxy, Tension, Tradition," 3:49
- Partridge, Dixie, "Ritual Rising," a poem, 4:114
- Peterson, Paul H., "Introduction to Reviews," 4:115; Review: Kimball, Stanley B., *On the Potter's Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball*, 1:125
- Poll, Richard D., "The Move South," 4:65
- Porter, Larry C., Review: Kimball, Stanley B., *Historic Sites and Markers Along the Mormon and Other Great Western Trails*, 2:114
- Russell, William D., Review: Launius, Roger D., *Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet*, 1:128
- Stout, W. Bryan, Reviews: Card, Orson Scott, *Seventh Son, Red Prophet*, and Prentice Alvin, 3:113
- Thorp, Malcolm, Review: Buchanan, Frederick S., ed., *A Good Time Coming: Mormon Letters to Scotland*, 3:121
- Todd, Karen, "In London, on Sunday," a poem, 3:128
- Van Orden, Bruce A., Review: Bitton, Davis, and Leonard J. Arrington, *Mormons and Their Historians*, 2:117
- Voros, J. Frederic, Jr., Reviews: McConkie, Joseph Fielding, and Robert L. Millet, *First and Second Nephi and Jacob through Mosiah*, volumes 1 and 2 of *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:121
- Walker, Jim, "Capons," a poem, 4:64
- Walker, Ronald W., Review: Campbell, Eugene, *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-1869*, 2:126; "Toward a Reconstruction of Mormon and Indian Relations, 1847-1877," 4:23
- Whittaker, David J., "Almanacs in the New England Heritage of Mormonism," 4:89; "Guest Editor's Introduction," 4:5; "The Hofmann Maze, with a Chronology and Bibliography of the Hofmann Case," 1:67; Review: Lindsey, Robert, *A Gathering of Saints: A True Story of Murder and Deceit*, 1:67; Review: Naifeh, Steven, and Gregory White Smith, *The Mormon Murders: A True Story of Greed, Forgery, Deceit, and Death*, 1:67; Review: Sillitoe, Linda, and Allen D. Roberts, *Salamanca: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders, with a Forensic Analysis by George J. Throckmorton*, 1:67



## ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

- "Afterwords," Thomas G. Alexander, 4:143
- "Almanacs in the New England Heritage of Mormonism," David J. Whittaker, 4:89
- "The Consequential Dimension of Mormon Religiosity," Stan L. Albrecht, 2:57
- "The Constitution of the State of Deseret," Peter Crawley, 4:7
- "Darryl F. Zanuck's *Brigham Young*: A Film in Context," James V. D'Arc, 1:5
- "Early British Christianity," C. Wilfred Griggs, 1:47
- "Guest Editor's Introduction," David J. Whittaker, 4:5
- "The Hofmann Maze: A Book Review Essay with a Chronology and Bibliography of the Hofmann Case," David J. Whittaker, 1:67
- "Humanity and Practical Christianity: Implications for a Worldwide Church," James R. Christianson, 1:35
- "Index, Volume 29, Numbers 1-4," Gary P. Gillum, 4:137
- "Joseph Smith and Modern Mormonism: Orthodoxy, Neoorthodoxy, Tension, and Tradition," Robert L. Millet, 3:49
- "Mormon Bibliography 1988," Scott H. Duvall, 3:79
- "The Move South," Richard D. Poll, 4:65
- "Perfection and Progression: Two Complementary Ways to Talk about God," Eugene England, 3:31
- "The Rise and Decline of Mormon San Bernardino," Edward Leo Lyman, 4:43
- "Robert Lang Campbell: 'A Wise Scribe in Israel' and Schoolman to the Saints," Frederick S. Buchanan, 3:5
- "Science and Theology: A Search for Uncommon Denominator," A. Lester Allen, 3:71
- "Toward a Reconstruction of Mormon and Indian Relations, 1847-1877," Ronald W. Walker, 4:23
- "The Wreck of the *Julia Ann*," John Devitry-Smith, 2:5
- "The Zelph Story," Kenneth W. Godfrey, 2:31

## BOOK REVIEWS

- The Edge of the Reservoir*, by Larry E. Morris, reviewed by Randall L. Hall, 2:111
- Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-1869*, by Eugene Campbell, reviewed by Ronald W. Walker, 2:126
- First and Second Nephi and Jacob through Mosiah*, volumes 1 and 2 of *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, by Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, reviewed by J. Frederic Voros, Jr., 2:121
- A Gathering of Saints: A True Story of Murder and Deceit*, by Robert Lindsey, reviewed by David J. Whittaker, 1:67



*A Good Time Coming: Mormon Letters to Scotland*, by Frederick S. Buchanan, ed., reviewed by Malcolm Thorp, 3:121

*Historic Sites and Markers Along the Mormon and Other Great Western Trails*, by Stanley B. Kimball, reviewed by Larry C. Porter, 2:114

*Joseph Smith III: Pragmatic Prophet*, by Roger D. Launius, reviewed by William D. Russell, 1:128

*Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian*, by Levi S. Peterson, reviewed by Newell G. Bringham, 4:117; reviewed by Maureen U. Beecher, 4:123; reviewed by Louis C. Midgley, 4:127

*More Faith than Fear: The Los Angeles Stake Story*, by Chad M. Orton, reviewed by A. Gary Anderson, 2:109

*The Mormon Murders: A True Story of Greed, Forgery, Deceit, and Death*, by Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, reviewed by David J. Whittaker, 1:67

*Mormons and Their Historians*, by Davis Bitton and Leonard J. Arrington, reviewed by Bruce A. Van Orden, 2:117

*On the Potter's Wheel: The Diaries of Heber C. Kimball*, by Stanley B. Kimball, reviewed by Paul H. Peterson, 1:125

*Prentice Alvin*, by Orson Scott Card, reviewed by W. Bryan Stout, 3:113

*Red Prophet*, by Orson Scott Card, reviewed by W. Bryan Stout, 3:113

*Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders, with a Forensic Analysis* by George J. Throckmorton, by Linda Sillitoe and Allen D. Roberts, reviewed by David J. Whittaker, 1:67

*Seventh Son*, by Orson Scott Card, reviewed by W. Bryan Stout, 3:113

*Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900*, by Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, reviewed by Thomas G. Alexander, 3:124

## POETRY

"The Apogee of Loneliness," Randall L. Hall, 4:136

"Bread and Water," Dennis Clark, 1:34

"Capons," Jim Walker, 4:64

"Death of a Daughter," Cara M. Bullinger, 4:142

"Hotblood," John S. Harris, 3:69

"In London, on Sunday," Karen Todd, 3:128

"Nanking," Timothy Liu, 3:48

"Paleontologist with an Ear Infection," Susan Howe, 2:30

"Ritual Rising," Dixie Partridge, 4:114

"The Route We Take," Fleda Brown Jackson, 3:28

"Snow," John Davies, 1:66

"Unconquerable," Edward L. Hart, 2:128



## SUBJECTS

- Almanacs, Mormon, 4:89  
 Bernhisel, John M., and the state of Deseret, 4:16  
 Bibliography, Mormon (1988), 3:79  
*Brigham Young* (film), 1:5  
 Brooks, Juanita, reviews of biography, 4:115, 117, 123, 127  
 Campbell, Robert Lang, 3:5  
 Christianity, early British, 1:47; practical, 1:35  
 Constitution, state of Deseret, 4:7  
 Council of Fifty, and the state of Deseret, 4:9  
 Deseret, state of—Constitution, 4:7  
 Godhead, 3:31  
 Hofmann, Mark W., bibliography, 1:103; chronology, 1:80; reviews of books about, 1:67  
 Johnston's army, 4:65  
*Julia Ann*, wreck of, 2:5  
 Lyman, Amasa M., and San Bernardino, 4:43  
 Migrations, Mormon, 2:5; 4:43, 65  
 Mormon-Indian relations, 1847–77, 4:23  
 Mormonism, as a worldwide church, 1:35; religiosity, 2:57; theology, 3:49  
 Movies (1930s), 1:5  
 Native Americans, and Mormons in Utah, 4:23  
 New England, and Mormon almanacs, 4:89  
 Perfection, and progression, 3:31  
 Progression, and perfection, 3:31  
 Religion, and science, 3:71  
 Rich, Charles C., and San Bernardino, 4:43  
 San Bernardino, California, as Mormon settlement, 4:43  
 Science, and theology, 3:71  
 Scotland, Mormonism in, 3:5  
 Smith, Joseph, and modern Mormonism, 3:49  
 Theology, and science, 3:71  
 Utah, Mormon migrations within, 4:65; territorial government of, 4:9  
 Utah War, 4:65  
 Young, Brigham, and Indians in Utah, 4:23; and San Bernardino, 4:43  
 Zanuck, Darryl F., and the film *Brigham Young*, 1:5  
 Zelph, 2:31



## Death of a Daughter

Her forehead was hot under my hand  
That summer. I would sit mending  
By her bed when I could. One of her brothers  
Who herded sheep for his grandfather  
Would bring her bunches of mountain stars,  
Paintbrush, daisies, and pirgantha.  
She would hold them until she grew weak,  
Fingering the leaves, smelling the meadows  
She once ran in. At night before I lowered the window,  
A wind wandered down from the canyon,  
Whisking across fields of lucerne,  
Filling the room with sage and juniper.  
The corn ripened, the calves fattened,  
Wool filled out on the lambs.  
In July, there were cherries to can.  
We spoke of the quilt we'd make that winter.  
On the first morning of September,  
Her forehead was cold beneath my hand.  
I saw the open window;  
The lucerne waved in the wind  
Rushing toward the mountains.

—Cara M. Bullinger



## Afterwords

Editor:

Reading Robert L. Millet's article "Joseph Smith and Modern Mormonism" in the summer 1989 issue reminded me of a story I heard some time ago. Jim met Bill in a grocery store. "Say, Bill," he said, "I just heard the good news about your winning a hundred thousand dollars." "Thanks," said Bill, "but actually it wasn't me. It was my brother. And he didn't win it; he lost it." Like Bill, I am always gratified to have someone take an interest in my work,<sup>1</sup> but it would be even more pleasant to find that he got the story right.

In taking issue with the point of view that Mormon doctrine before 1835 was quite close to that of contemporary Protestant Arminianism, Millet just didn't get the story straight. To begin with, although Millet and I may disagree on our interpretations of the message of the Book of Mormon on the nature of the Godhead, if I understand his point of view correctly we do *not* differ on our interpretation of the relationship between the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith's thought.

Beginning with the second full paragraph on page 51, Millet goes to great lengths to argue against a point of view that Blake Ostler explicated seven years after my article was published. He seems to assume that I share Ostler's views. But although I find Ostler's interpretation quite interesting, it has not convinced me. Millet begins his argument by saying, "To suggest that the Book of Mormon reflects Joseph Smith's 'early thought' is to place the Nephite record within the developmental process of

Joseph Smith and the Saints." Then he proceeds to argue that for Joseph Smith to have placed his own ideas in the Book of Mormon would be "tantamount to deceit and misrepresentation: it is to claim that the doctrines and principles are of ancient date (as the record itself declares), when, in fact, they are a fabrication (albeit an 'inspired' fabrication) of a nineteenth-century man. We have every reason to believe that the Book of Mormon came *through* Joseph Smith, not *from* him."

Moving from the first assumption, Millet proceeds, "Presumably those who believe the Book of Mormon presents a trinitarian concept of God assume that the book reflects the prevailing sentiments of the nineteenth century concerning God." It is not for me to say whether Millet's characterization of Ostler's views is accurate, but his argument is quite misplaced as applied to my article.

In fact, I believe the Book of Mormon is an ancient text and that the doctrines explicated in the book are doctrines believed by the Nephites and other ancient peoples whose record the book contains. Instead of assuming that the Book of Mormon reflects Joseph Smith's early thought as Millet evidently supposes, I assume that Joseph Smith's early thought reflected the things he had learned from the Book of Mormon. Presumably since Joseph Smith believed the Book of Mormon to be the word of God, he also believed the doctrines that the book preached at the time he translated it from the Nephite language. That those teachings were similar to those of some



nineteenth-century Arminian-based Protestant groups such as the Methodists and Disciples, I find interesting. I used those groups' doctrines for comparative purposes in my article and suggested that the similarity may have helped in attracting some early converts to Mormonism. However, that does not mean that the Book of Mormon doctrines were drawn from contemporary Protestantism, only that they were similar.

Later revelations by God to Joseph Smith, particularly section 130 of the Doctrine and Covenants, showed that the Saints were wrong in some of their early beliefs. As a result, they preached different doctrines, and we now know that God and Jesus Christ have bodies and that the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit.

Clearly Millet and I read both the Book of Mormon and the Lectures on Faith quite differently. I would be interested to see his construction of Abinadi's message to King Noah in Mosiah chapter 15, or Ammon's message to King Lamoni in Alma chapter 18. I assume he would produce the same sort of argument he does on the Fifth Lecture on Faith. But these differences have absolutely nothing to do with my views of the Book of Mormon or of the relationship between Joseph Smith's thought and the book.

The academic life of Brigham Young University, and indeed of any major university, depends on open and vigorous scholarly discourse. *BYU Studies* and other scholarly publications ought to publish all sides of questions dealing with the Mormon past. Moreover, all scholars should expect to see their positions contradicted—vigorously contradicted—by those who disagree. That is part of what the academy is about.

There is, however, a line that we should not overstep in our disagreement since it separates scholarly argument from personal attack. We cross that line when we either

misattribute or misrepresent the beliefs of a scholar with whom we disagree. Since I have had no previous interaction with Robert Millet on these issues, I assume that in this case the problem is merely misattribution rather than intentional misrepresentation. Nevertheless, to call into question even obliquely a Church member's belief in such basic matters as the historical validity of the Book of Mormon or the authenticity of Joseph Smith's revelations from God is to cast a chill on any scholarly discussion by shifting the ground from legitimate argument to personality or orthodoxy. It is the functional equivalent in the Mormon community of a national discourse in which accusations of Communism or Fascism are leveled at an opponent. Immediately, the person who is the object of the charge must make a choice that no scholar should have to make: a choice between appearing oversensitive by defending himself or herself against an unjust accusation or ignoring the matter and leaving at least some readers to assume that the charge is true. Why will some readers believe the charge? Because an author in whom they have some confidence has made it.

The bottom line is that charges or even hints of heresy or lack of orthodoxy have no place in academic discourse and ought to be excised from any scholarly discussion of the Mormon past.

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#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup>Thomas G. Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine: From Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology," *Sunstone* 5 (July–August 1980): 24–33.







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